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Author's Note: This is a sequel to "Where in the World is Harry Potter?" Read that first to make much sense of this story. There will be spoilers for that one.

## CHAPTER ONE

Harry Potter had soundly defeated the Dark Lady FoxFire and her followers were quickly apprehended as well. Now that the immediate threat had abated, the Ministry was beginning to set up court sessions for all the perpetrators. The many members of the Ministry had begun reparations on all the damaged parts and were preparing statements to address the public. The people from Hogwarts all took this opportunity to head back to the castle and a delicious Leaving Feast.

Professor Hermione Granger, Professor Severus Snape, Headmaster Albus Dumbledore, Caretaker Nymphadora Tonks, and Harry Potter all arrived back in the Headmaster's office at Hogwarts. The public reappearance of Harry Potter seemed less important after the dangers and attack at the Ministry.

"Harry, would you like to join us for the Feast?" Albus asked with a kind smile. "Whether you do or not I would also like you to stay tonight for an emergency Order meeting. This threat may be neutralized but we will at least need to discuss it."

Harry gave Albus a harsh stony-faced stare. He wouldn't break eye contact or blink and the rest of the room just watched them in silence. Finally, Harry just smiled and said, "Yeah, I was planning on the meeting, but eating in the Great Hall in disguise or the kitchens makes no difference to me." Harry smiled and quickly shifted his form into that of Remus Lupin since he was a common visitor to the castle and staff table.

They made their way into the Great Hall, where the meal had begun, and Minerva had already proudly declared Gryffindor the winners of this year's House cup. Seated next to her was Nicholas Flamel, who was carefully watching all the Order members filing into seats at the Staff table.

The Headmaster stood and attracted their attention. "I apologize for interrupting your meal, but I must share some grievous news." He paused and looked over at all the curious faces. "The Ministry of Magic was attacked by a self-proclaimed Dark Lady FoxFire and her own brand of Dark followers. They destroyed a number of areas and there was at least six confirmed fatalities." Albus paused and his eyes lit up with hope and promise. "She was quickly and soundly defeated by the arrival of Harry Potter, and her followers were shortly thereafter subdued. We are not yet sure of all the damage that has been done or how bad it is, but the immediate threat has passed." Albus's eyes twinkled a bit and if you watched closely he was even smirking a little. "I know how much Mr. Potter despises attention and people praising his name, so let us take advantage of his absence and raise our glasses in a toast," Albus lifted his goblet into the air, "To Harry Potter!" He loudly finished with a proud smile.

"To Harry Potter!" was heard loudly echoing all around the Great Hall. A number of people exclaimed "Praise be to Harry!" While others cheered and yelled back, "Praise be to Potter!"

Nicholas was frowning harshly, particularly at Albus when he turned to smirk at Nicholas. Nicholas also noticed Remus was scowling especially harshly though subtly winking at him.

Albus sat back down and the feast continued. Nicholas had slowly and quietly stood up and was sneaking up behind 'Remus Lupin.' When he was directly behind him and at point blank range, he yelled out "Stupefy!" extremely loudly and a vicious stunner slammed into Remus' back. He slumped into unconsciousness and fell face first onto his dinner plate.

Albus and Hermione, the only two who really knew what was going on, just goggled incredulously at Professor Flamel. He smiled broadly at them and gave them a thumbs up. "Finally! We've got the sexy little

bugger!" Nicholas exclaimed to his colleagues. He vaguely noticed he had attracted the attention of the entire student body who were watching the head table extremely curiously.

Minerva McGonagall had a worried look at her face, most likely due to Nicholas' interesting choice of descriptive adjectives.

Nicholas smiled to the students and just said, "Don't mind me. Nothing to see here folks. Carry on."

He reached into one of his robe's many pockets and found a couple of dark metal bracelets and attached them to Remus' wrists. He then conjured a leash and collar around Remus' neck and dragged him out of the Hall. The students just seemed to watch this scene and then went back to their meals. They all knew their DADA teacher, Professor Flamel, was a bit peculiar and apparently found this relatively normal behavior. The staff was just watching in shock. Hermione and Albus exchanged several worried glances at each other. Draco and Severus were both smirking victoriously though.

Professor Flamel arrived back in the Great Hall just as the students were all leaving, and after a brief discussion with Albus found out about the Order meeting that would be in his office in just two hours. The Order had assembled in the Headmaster's office and Nicholas Flamel was there with his 'prisoner' Remus Lupin, who was still unconscious. He was attracting some odd looks from most members, particularly after Remus arrived and saw him. Remus just shook his head and had a feeling Harry probably deserved whatever Nicholas had in store for him.

Albus stood and began the meeting. "As you all have heard, the Ministry was attacked this afternoon. Seven people were killed, though two of those were followers of this Dark Lady FoxFire. Additionally, another nine members of the Ministry were loyal followers of her as well. Several other members were put under the Imperius curse for the purposes of today's attack by some of her loyal followers. She was swiftly and soundly defeated by the ubiquitous Mr. Potter. Who is, it appears, a current prisoner of Nicholas' at the moment."

The entire Order shifted their heads to look at the widely smiling kooky old man, and his unconscious prisoner to whom all signs pointed to him being Harry Potter, despite appearing to be Remus Lupin. Or at least one of the two in the room.

Nicholas smugly explained, "Caught me a big one boys. This one's a keeper. At least 80 kilos-"

"Oi! I'll have you know I weigh 77, thank you very much." And very quickly the room realized Harry was not quite as unconscious as they thought.

Nicholas smirked at the man who morphed back into his more familiar appearance as Harry Potter. "You might want to check your scale, because I think all this inactivity has left you a bit soft. You've spent too much time sitting down researching and stuffing your craw full of sweets."

The Order was looking a little worried when Harry just growled back at Nicholas.

Harry shook his bound wrists in front of him. "And what's with the bracelets? You think just by binding my wandless magic you can keep a hold of me?"

Severus Snape smiled at his so-called Master's predicament. "We can certainly try."

Harry snapped his head towards the Slytherin Head of House. He stared at him defiantly. When Severus responded with a smirk, Harry just smiled. And with no warning of sound a red colored spell shot out of what appeared to be Harry's eyes and was headed straight at the Potions Master. Severus jumped out of his seat with a yelp and took cover on the floor. The spell smacked into the back of Snape's now vacant chair and left it slightly singed.

"Well you keep on trying now Severus. And later you can let me know how that worked out." Harry said with a smile as the slightly embarrassed man got back into his seat as he was grumbling to himself.

Harry's smile went away as his attention became directed on Professor Flamel. "And you, you old crackpot! If you'd taken the time to ask someone, you'd know I already had agreed to come to this meeting. No kidnapping and pointless shackling necessary."

Nicholas shrugged. "Oops?"

Harry rolled his eyes. "Lunatic. So what's up? Everyone know what happened? Get some information from Ms. FoxFire?"

Albus felt a bit scared with both Nicholas and Harry in this meeting. Particularly since they spent most of it arguing. That and the fact that they were the same person left him feeling like his abilities as an armchair psychiatrist would be insufficient and Harry needs to seek professional help. Perhaps a group session or couples counseling with Harry and Nicholas together. Albus quickly remembered he had been asked a question before his daydream got too far into uncharted territories. "Ahh yes. The Dark Lady FoxFire. She wasn't quite so homicidally psychopathic as Tom, but she wanted to try and pull the Wizarding World even further from the muggle world and felt a revolution was the easiest way. She assumed you were gone or she would never have acted." Albus' eyes twinkled. "Apparently Mr. Potter, just your reappearance was enough to essentially break her spirit. I doubt she will be any sort of threat and expect any more of her followers will be even more scared of you."

"At least some people want to leave me alone." Harry mumbled.

"Oh come on, Harry," Nicholas smiled. "You're among friends. You can admit you love the attention."

Harry got up and looked at Nicholas furiously for even suggesting such a thing.

Severus' eyes went wide. "I knew it!"

Harry turned around to face Snape. "Severus, I don't think you want to make me angry right now."

Nicholas mocked, "Oh yes. Merlin forbid you look flustered in your next photo opportunity."

Harry whipped his head around quickly to Nicholas and a red spell flew out his eyes again. Nicholas calmly reinforced his shield and sent the spell straight back at Harry. Harry fell to the floor and ducked with a smile on his face while the spell flew over his head. Severus felt a jolt of pleasure explode through his arm and jumped up out of his seat. Just in time to catch the red spell, which as it turned out was a tickling charm, right in the crotch.

The Potions Master collapsed on the floor letting out a continuous moan while his thighs and upper legs convulsed from the charm. Harry was just cracking up, laughing out loud, and the humor seemed to spread as others were now too laughing at the strange movements and sounds the former spy was making on the floor.

Nicholas looked a bit indignant despite smiling and exclaimed, "You did that on purpose!"

Harry smiled and retorted, "So did you!"

Severus slowly wheezed out, "I'm... going... to... kill... you... both."

Less than a minute later, Professor Snape's spasms seemed to have passed and he just lay there breathing deeply.

The real Remus Lupin spoke up. "Umm, Harry? I know you can probably still do thought magic beyond just wandless right now, but are you really shooting spells out your eyes?"

Harry smiled and turned towards Remus. "To be honest, I've never tried. If it didn't work, I'd probably fry my eyeballs so I think I'll put off trying for a while." Harry scrunched his eyes briefly and his eyeglasses reappeared on his face. "I keep an invisibility charm on the glasses most of the time, even though I don't need them anymore. But you may recognize the round metal of the frames as being remarkably similar to the rings I showed most of you at Christmas."

More people were now catching onto the usefulness of the rings.

Nicholas continued. "Anyways, as you may know, if you've been talking to Hogwarts, I'm not coming back as Defense Professor, and we think you should take the job."

"Why would I want to do that? From what I hear the job is cursed."

Snape grumbled out "How much more cursed can you get than Harry Potter taking the job."

A number of people laughed at that. Even Harry was chuckling. "I'll let that one slide, Sevvie. Seeing as you've already provided me with enough entertainment for the day." Harry turned his attention to the Headmaster. "But before I agree, I just want to make sure you all realize what you're signing up for."

Albus looked a bit shocked. He thought Harry had already agreed. And then he realized that that too had been bound by the knowledge suppression hex. Albus smiled. "I think we have a pretty good idea."

"Really?" Harry stated with wide eyes. "Because I'm a bit unhinged. And you have to be getting barmier with age if you are asking me to corrupt young children."

Albus was beginning to agree a bit with Harry and decided to squelch that line of thinking quickly. "I'm well aware we may be sorting students with more maturity than you, Mr. Potter, but I have complete faith in your abilities to teach the subject."

Harry frowned at the dig before thinking about it and agreeing to a point. "Alright." He then smirked victoriously. "But remember, you asked for this."

Albus' age was clearly showing and he nodded with a weak smile.

Harry looked around. "Anything else you need from me tonight? I used a fair amount of magic earlier and would like a good night's sleep. Never tried turning into a nundu before."

No one spoke up, though a few people seemed jealous and wished they could turn into a nundu.

Albus looked down at his hands in surprise. "Where did these handcuffs come from?"

Harry smiled brightly and raised his bracelet free hand. "Right here old man. I'll be in touch with you soon. Toodles all." And with a pop Harry disappeared from the Headmaster's office.

Nicholas jumped up from his seat. "How the heck did he get rid of those bracelets? They had been keyed in specifically to my magic!"

Albus frustratingly exhaled. "I wonder."

Nicholas winced. "Oh dear. I suppose he's changed the password counter-curse."

Albus frowned. "Are you sure you don't know the password counter?" He pleaded, "Are you really sure?"

Nicholas tapped his chin thoughtfully. "I feel like I should know it." He sighed and just shook his head.

Hermione was struggling in her chair and managed to say "urgh" a few times.

A grumpy, handcuffed Albus Dumbledore leaned back and sighed loudly. "This year is going to suck."



## CHAPTER TWO

It had been a week since Hermione or Tonks had seen Harry. According to Dumbledore he's been around plenty, helping Nicholas move out and Harry move in. Apparently even Tonks got to say goodbye to Nicholas and asked her to pass on his well wishes to Hermione. Hermione's frustrated huffs left Tonks wondering if maybe Hermione had the hots for the older man. Of course 'older' seems a bit insufficient to describe that difference in age.

One night the two staff members camped out in the hallway leading to the DADA office. Unsurprisingly they were unable to locate Harry and were frustrated to hear Albus inform them that they just missed him at breakfast.

Ginny was going to help them try and trap him today. The three girls were fairly certain he was in his staff quarters at the moment and were debating the best way to finally nail him down and get him talking to them.

"Why not just put sleeping spells on all the corridors around here?" Ginny asked.

Hermione shrugged. "I'm not sure he uses the corridors. He could just be Potty-popping all over the castle. And he might spot those."

Tonks frowned. "None of the elves would let us slip anything in his food would they?"

Ginny shook her head. "Apprentice Dobby wouldn't let something like that past him."

Hermione sighed. "We cannot contact him at all. He's completely avoiding us, even though every other staff member has run into him and talked to him."

Tonks was thinking deeply. "I'm remembering in the muggle Superman movies, Lois would just fall off a building or a waterfall to

bring her cheeky git around to save her. So who wants me to push them off the Astronomy Tower?"

Hermione and Ginny just looked at each other and shook their heads at Tonks' suggestion. Hermione added, "If you remember in the movie, Tonks, I'm pretty sure she fell in the waterfall, got soaked, nearly drowned, and it didn't work."

Tonks responded with a small "oh."

"Could we put glue everywhere until he gets stuck? Once we get a hold of him we can guilt him into meeting us more regularly." Ginny suggested.

"What if we tried sending him a note with an owl?" a new voice suggested.

Hermione shook her head. "That's too obvi- HARRY!"

Harry smiled as his bellowing friend. "Hermy!"

Ginny and Tonks both lunged for Harry to grab him in a hug, though they did bounce back at first smacking into his body.

"Where have you been?" an indignant Hermione yelled. Though it was unsure whether she was indignant that he had been avoiding them, or that she was having to wait her turn to hug him.

"Umm...moving in. Figuring out how to teach. Talking to Albus and the rest of the staff. Where have you been?" Harry explained releasing Tonks and Ginny and giving Hermione a hug.

"Looking for you!" the three ladies said in unison.

"Aww" Harry smiled. "My wenches miss me."

"Oi!" Tonks interrupted. "Be nice. We've just been wanting to see you."

Harry's eyes twinkled. "So I gathered. Nicholas seemed to think it would be in my best interests to avoid you for a little while. Although he was quite taken with your breasts, Hermione and was trying to determine if there were levels of perfection. I inquired about when he saw them and he explained that Neville showed him." Harry shook his head and asked, "What on earth has become of the innocent girl I used to go to school with!"

Hermione went red with a mix of embarrassment and anger. "Shush you! He's a dirty old man with an adolescent mind."

Ginny and Tonks were a bit shocked to hear no denials of this unnamed incident from Hermione.

Harry looked surprised. "Good lord Hermione. He's older than most dirt and you're crushing like a first year."

Hermione's inability to say any of the things she kept wanting to left her standing there struggling to make sounds with her mouth. This only assured Ginny and Tonks of the truth of poor deviant Hermione's feelings.

"Do you want me to hurt you, Harry?" Hermione managed to say without unclenching her teeth.

Harry smiled. "Certainly not until we've agreed on a safe word." This had the desired effect of silencing one girl's fuming and two other girls' laughter as they all considered that statement and found themselves a bit flustered.

"Man you three are easy." Harry added. "But seriously, I thought I could use a trip out of the castle, and decided an appearance in public might make the next year a bit easier. And I thought you all might like to join me."

Ginny and Tonks quickly hooked an arm through one of Harry's and assumed their positions on either side. Harry saw the frustration on Hermione's face and somehow always felt a bit more childish around these ladies. With a smile, a bloody visceral arm exploded out of

Harry's stomach and the hand opened towards Hermione. "Did you want to hold my arm too, Hermione?"

Hermione paled a bit and stepped back. "No, I think I'll just wait my turn for a proper arm thank you." Hermione turned around and the four headed on out of Hogwarts.

The illusion disappeared from Harry's gaping wound of a stomach. As they walked Harry stage whispered to Ginny and Tonks. "Isn't that cute? She's waiting on great Grandpappy Nicky to offer her a proper arm."

Hermione whipped around and cast a bright orange hex Harry's way. The two girls next to him jumped startled, but Harry barely moved as a ring appeared in front of him and swallowed up the curse.

"Are we going to behave now?" Harry asked as though scolding a bad dog.

Hermione snarled but nodded. "Where'd that spell go anyway?"

Harry shrugged and said "Potions classroom. I just send most extra spells to fly around in there." Harry continued walking without his escorts who were smiling at the thought of random hexes flying into the Potions instructors. "For the sake of peace, let's avoid the holding arms part ladies. Besides, we're off to scout out the main competition for my wenches' hearts."

Ginny pursed her lips curiously, "Malfoy?"

Harry just made a pained face, while Hermione went up to Ginny and slapped her soundly across the cheek. Tonks was watching them a bit curiously.

"What did you do that for?" Ginny exclaimed.

"Ginny! Listen to yourself!" Hermione explained, "You remember our promise in my sixth year."

"What?" Ginny smartly replied.

Harry and Tonks looked at each other sheepishly and continued to watch.

"You remember," Hermione continued. "We promised each other that if we ever found ourselves attracted to Malfoy, it'd be up to us to smack the crazy out of the other."

"But that was because we thought he was an evil git!" Ginny cried.

Harry added, "He is a git. Just not the genocide-loving mortal enemy sort of evil git. More the bloody annoying ponce type."

Tonks and Hermione nodded with Harry's assessment.

"Fine," Ginny said with a roll of her eyes. "Forget the git. So who is the competition for your wenches' hearts?"

"Stop calling us wenches!" Hermione exclaimed.

"Can we at least keep moving people?" Tonks asked tired of standing around.

"Yeah," Harry said. "Why are we walking anyway? Come here." And with a firm hold on all three of the girls he quickly popped them away to reappear in the foyer of St. Mungo's. The three girls were a bit disoriented at the quick change of surroundings.

"A little more warning next time, please," Hermione asked as she steadied herself.

Harry shrugged. "Sorry. Never tried popping more than one other person before. Good to know three is easy enough. As for the competition, it's been a while since I saw Simon, and figured if I'm out in the public now I owed him a visit."

The three girls all let out little coos thinking of Simon. And their caring immature source of transportation too. Harry just rolled his eyes and led the way through the halls to the new permanent children's wing. A few quick discussions and Harry had managed to get clearance to

take Simon out for the afternoon and dinner. They arrived at Simon's room and found him playing with two Harry Potter action figures. Harry quickly silenced the girls from any comment with a vicious stare. Particularly since Simon was playing a wedding and the bride and groom were both Harry Potter. Hermione seemed to find this funnier than the others but hadn't attracted Simon's attention yet.

Finally Harry cleared his throat and asked, "Am I interrupting something?"

Simon, who was presiding over the wedding, paused and looked up. His face was surprised and he blurted out "Harry? Uncle Poncy!" Before dropping his action figures and running up to hug the young man.

"How are you doing, Simon?" Harry asked.

"I'm bored, Uncle Poncy." Simon explained before hugging the rest of his guests. "Hiya Aunt Ginny, Aunt Tonky, Aunt Hermy. What're you guys doing here?"

"We wanted to see you Simon!" Ginny responded hugging him back. "You feeling up to hanging out with us this afternoon? We'll try not to be boring."

"Of course I'm up for it! What are we going to do?" Simon exclaimed with glee. He was holding his arms up towards his Uncle Poncy apparently expecting to be picked up. Harry obliged him and threw Simon up on his shoulders.

"What do you want to do, Simon? It's up to you." Harry said as they walked out of St. Mungo's. Simon was smiling and loving the view of the world from Harry Potter's shoulders.

"Can we go to Diagon Alley first? And then maybe do some flying?" An excited young man said. "Remember, Uncle Poncy, you promised to take me flying."

Harry laughed. "I know I did. I can show you the Quidditch Pitch at Hogwarts and we can fly there. But first Diagon Alley. Ladies, if you

would please place a hand on me.” Harry paused for a second. “Aunt Tonky, I meant above the waist.” A blush, a movement, and the group of five disappeared from St. Mungo’s and reappeared in a familiar back room of The Leaky Cauldron.

“Did you want to walk now, Simon?” Harry asked the young boy on his shoulders.

“No thanks, Uncle Poncy. I was wanting to show the world that I get to ride on Harry Potter.” Simon explained. The three ladies all reacted on instinct and sent jealous stares towards Simon before catching onto the innocence of the child.

Harry grumbled a bit while the three ladies with them chuckled. “Fine. But don’t blame me if you end up on the cover of Witches Weekly.”

“Do you really think so?” Simon asked excitedly. The only response was louder laughter from the girls as they walked out after greeting Tom, and made their way to the brick wall in back.

“Here Simon, you can use this wand and tap the brick to open the alleyway. If you’re going to be freeloading a ride up top, you can at least make yourself useful.” Harry explained handing a wand to the young boy.

They paused waiting for Simon who wasn’t making any movements towards the brick. “Do you know which brick it is, Simon?”

Simon nodded quietly. “Yeah, but Nurse Ratched told me I shouldn’t use any magic. It’s dangerous for me because there’s something wrong about mine.”

Harry nodded. “Alright if your nurse says so you should probably listen to her. Why don’t you just instead push the brick like a button?”

Simon did as he was told and was shocked to see that it worked and the archway opened up to reveal the bustling street. “Whoa! I thought you was messing with me, Uncle Poncy.” Simon looked around at the magical alley he liked so much. Harry was just standing there letting

Simon enjoy his time out when the boy in question ordered out, "Whaddya waiting for? Onward march!"

Harry and the three ladies chuckled at the nine year old and led the way through the alley. It took almost five whole seconds before somewhere yelled out "Harry Potter!" and the crowds around them began to swell. Simon was loving the attention. Harry, when prompted for an autograph smartly responded. "Nope no autographs from me. You can have my assistant Simon give you one though." Harry looked upwards at the boy on his shoulders. "Simon? Think you can sign my name for me?" He nodded happily and proceeded to try and sign "Uncle Poncy" for the admiring fan. When after three minutes Simon was still working on it, they had managed to ensure no more requests for autographs for their constitutional in the alley. The fans continued to swarm much to Harry's discomfort, but he wasn't about to deny this to Simon. After about fifteen minutes in which they hadn't actually moved any further down the alley, Simon raised his voice. "Alright people, that's enough! I gotta keep my Uncle Poncy in line! So get out of our way!" He punctuated this with slaps to the top of Harry's head.

Harry was more than happy to extend his magic a little and clear them a path. "Nice work, Simon. Why don't we head on down to the end of the alley and then go to Hogwarts and fly for a little while?"

Simon nodded his agreement, and the group of five continued their leisurely walk down the alley. They continued attracting the crowds and there were a few reporters and photographers yelling out questions that the group ignored. When they were a good block past Gringotts, Simon spoke up. "Okay. Let's go fly now."

Harry just looked at the girls who happily placed hands on Harry and they disappeared with a pop and reappeared right outside the broom shed by the Quidditch Pitch.

"Wow!" Simon said as he saw Hogwarts for the first time. Harry sent a message to Hogwarts and she responded by doing her best to welcome Simon.



Ginny, Tonks, and Hermione all noticed the castle seemed to almost glow with warmth of home and began wondering how in the heck Harry had managed that.

“Yep, that’s Hogwarts. I was thinking you might want to go out for dinner, but if you like instead we can eat up there and give you a brief tour of the school.”

Simon smiled. “I wanna see the castle! The healers tell me I probably won’t get to go to Hogwarts but I’m still working on them.”

“Sounds like a plan,” Harry said setting Simon down. “Hey, how was your party at Malfoy Manor?”

Simon was walking on his own now and frowned a bit. “It hasn’t happened yet.”

“It hasn’t? Why not?” Hermione asked.

“Because Mr. Malfoy keeps ignoring me! I’ve sent him dozens of letters and even asked a couple of nurses to try and talk to him for me.”

The air around Harry became electric. “He what! That arrogant... excuse me for a second.” Harry stopped moving and closed his eyes in concentration. He put his index finger on the middle of his forehead and began tracing slow circles around his head. On the third pass, he stopped on the back right side of his head and turned his body. He wrapped his hand around an invisible thread of magic and gave it a yank. With a loud crack, Draco Malfoy appeared next to them all with a loud yelp. He was holding a teddy bear in one hand, and was rubbing his arm where Tibbles was located quite furiously. “Crikey Potter. I forgot you can do that. Oh sheesh. Through Hogwarts wards to. That makes me feel safe.”

The complete lack of emotion on Harry’s face and thick tension in the air made Malfoy pause and think hard. He looked at his other two co-workers, Tonks and Hermione, and saw them frowning at him too. “Aw crud. What did I do now? Whatever it was I’m sorry.”

Harry remained stoic and coldly asked, "Why are you ignoring Simon's attempts to contact you to set up his party at Malfoy Manor?"

Draco furrowed his brow. "Simon?" Finally the pieces came together. "Oh right! The charity auction. Man, you had me scared for a minute there."

Harry remained calm and arched an eyebrow. "Is there something else I should know about?" He laced his words with magic to make him sound even more imposing.

Draco cringed. "Err... no. I mean... I don't think." He was having troubles and was still rubbing at Tibbles on his arm, who seemed to be particularly itchy. "Aw knock it off, Potter. You're freaking me out here."

The girls had never seen Draco act so, well... human. Harry was enjoying this quite a bit, and was continuing on with it mainly for Simon's benefit. He maintained his intent stare at Draco.

"For the love of Merlin, Potter. Just Legilimens my whole life and stop staring at me like that." Draco pleaded.

Harry smiled a bit finally. "You want me to read your mind? You've been around Severus too much. You don't even fight back anymore. It takes the fun out of it."

Draco smirked at him. "I take the battles I can win, and make sure the ones I lose aren't fun for the winner." He shrugged. "And you're going to turn down this opportunity to glean all my wicked plans for you this year?"

Harry waved him off with a confident smile. "You're too certain that I haven't already."

Draco looked at Harry closely and saw a smirk that told very little. His arm started itching like crazy. He smacked himself there mumbling "Bad Tibbles."

“Anyways, Draco. You’re here to explain why you haven’t thrown a party yet as well as make all the necessary plans to rectify this mistake.” Harry stated as fact.

“Right,” Draco said. He turned to Simon, “I’m sorry Simon. I was so busy with my new job at Hogwarts I haven’t even checked most of my unsolicited mail.”

Ginny smiled and pointed out. “Well aren’t you lucky that it’s summer now.”

Draco rolled his eyes and drawled, “Brilliant observation, Weaslette—Yeowch!” He was slapping Tibbles again.

“Play nice.” Harry warned.

“Sorry,” Draco said with the enthusiasm of a dementor. “Very well, Simon. What would you like? When? How many and who?”

Simon who had begun clinging to his Uncle Poncy and Aunt Tonky stepped forward now and said. “I want a party for everyone in my ward.” He added after a brief pause and encouraging smile from his friends, “And my Uncle Poncy and Aunts Tonky, Aunts Hermy, and Aunts Ginny. And it won’t be boring!”

Draco smiled at the young boy’s demands. “Not boring? That could be tricky with all those Aunts there.”

Harry smiled at getting an invitation. “I think I can help make sure it’s not too boring.”

Draco winced. “Oh lord. Potter around children his mental age. I’m going to need some stronger safety wards, aren’t I?”

Harry smiled at Draco now. “I’d love to see you come up with some wards to stop me.” He smirked challengingly at Draco. “But how about this Malfoy: The Saturday after next. Next weekend is the full moon, so if there are any young werewolves, they will be back to normal health by then. You set it all up. And you will make this fun. I

expect some good entertainment for children. Games, prizes, cake, and perhaps ponies or something similar.”

“Ponies? You want ponies?” Draco was aghast.

Harry maintained eye contact with Draco. “Simon, do you want ponies?”

Simon cheered. “Yeah! Ponies!” Simon pumped his fist and added, “But not if the dragons are going to eat them.”

Harry snorted and turned to Simon. “I like you’re thinking.” He was chuckling and turned back to Draco. “Did you get all that, Malfoy?”

Draco was just looking at Simon in shock. He shook his head and turned back to Harry. “Yeah. I’m not too certain on the dragons but I’ll see what I can do and come up with something. You might have to sign off as an honorary wrangler to get away with having dangerous beasts around sick children.”

Simon now noticed the teddy bear still in Draco’s hand. “Is that for me?” he asked innocently.

Draco only now caught on to the fact that he had brought Mr. Hendrick Von Snarglepuss the Third with him. He gulped uneasily and looked at the curious witches and cute young boy. “Err yeah... of course. I mean who else would it be for.” Draco finished with a nervous laugh.

Simon smiled brightly and reached for the teddy.

Draco was very reluctantly holding it out for Simon, but he was not letting go.

Tonks, Hermione, and Ginny were all watching Draco struggle with wide eyes.

Harry sighed to himself and said “Hold on, Simon. Let me double check that he’s not giving you anything cursed. These Slytherins can be crafty.” With a roll of his eyes Harry took the teddy and subtly

duplicated it. He held the original behind his back and handed the duplicate to Simon. "It's clean. And you might want to give your new bear a name."

While Simon was checking out his new teddy bear, Harry was turning the original into a portkey. With his back to Draco, Harry flipped him his teddy bear and said, "See ya later, Draco. Tell Salazar when you need my help setting up the party." Just as he finished, Draco caught Mr. Hendrick Von Snarglepuss the Third and disappeared from the Quidditch Pitch.

It was probably for the best that Draco disappeared then, because Simon just yelled out, "I'm going to call my new bear Harry!"

Harry rolled his eyes. "Let's get a broom and go flying."

The three ladies were still standing there in quiet shock. Draco Malfoy was not quite the same person around Harry as he was around everyone else. They were reevaluating their opinion of him. Hermione looked over and saw Ginny's eyes were still wide and glazed over a bit. Hermione responded quickly and began slapping her. "Get that crazy out of there, Ginny!"

## CHAPTER THREE

Harry had been going for a good half hour of diving and extremely fast flying with Simon. Simon had been letting out a constant scream of "Wheeeeeeee" for minutes, without apparently stopping to breathe. Now that he was being relatively silent, though he was still nodding vigorously, Harry was thinking perhaps they should land and get some dinner. And some sort of beverage for Simon's throat too, maybe.

Despite having landed, Simon's hair still looked as though the wind was blowing it. In fact, his whole face looked as though it had frozen in a wind tunnel. The smile splitting across his face was unmistakable.

Seeing the two nine-year-olds at heart were now temporarily safe from the dangers of gravity, Ginny, Tonks, and Hermione were getting a little concerned at the lack of response from the youngest boy. Ginny quietly asked, "Simon, are you okay?"

Simon snapped his head towards her. He then looked around and realized he wasn't flying anymore. "Ohmigawd Uncle Poncy, that was awesome! That was amazing! That was incredible! I've never been so scared in my life and I loved it!" By this point Simon was now jumping up and down in excitement. "I feel like I've gotten a do-over on life! Cuz I was pretty sure you killed us out there!" Simon looked down. "I didn't even wet myself!"

The girls were giggling at Simon's response. Hermione whispered to Harry, "How did he manage to not wet himself?"

Harry rolled his eyes and whispered back, "Oh, he wet himself alright. That's why I kept going after he fell into shock. Needed to dry us both off."

Hermione frowned. "You could've just used magic."

Harry shrugged. "It's not like Simon minded a little more flying."

Hermione shook her head and asked loudly, "So Simon, you ready for dinner and then a tour of Hogwarts?"

"Yeah!" Simon asked, "Can I see your classrooms?"

"Of course!" Harry answered. "And Aunt Tonky can show off her office, since she doesn't have a classroom. Maybe Albus is around and you can check out his office. That's probably the coolest one in the school."

"Alright! So what's for dinner?" Simon asked.

"I don't know." Harry shook his head. "Dobby?"

With a pop, the odd little elf appeared.

"Aaahh!" Simon yelled. "I don't want to eat him!"

Dobby turned to the young man now clinging to his Master's leg. "And I don't want to eat you either."

"Aaahh!" Simon yelled.

"Settle down Simon. We're not eating Dobby. He's my friend and apprentice. And he won't eat you either. I was just going to ask him what the elves were preparing for dinner this evening."

"Oh" a calmed Simon responded.

Dobby smiled and nodded. "Master Harry, Simon. The elves have prepared a small meal of hamburgers, meatloaf, turkey, fried chicken, baked chicken, roasted chicken, chicken soup, roast beef, pork tenderloin, steak, fish, leg of lamb, and a salad for vegemetarians. As well as all the usual side dishes."

"Small meal?" Tonks asked. "How many people will be dining on this small meal?"

“Counting you five,” Dobby began counting on his fingers and toes many times repeatedly before finishing, “probably seven. Eight if Miss Loony shows up.” Dobby answered.

“Luna’s coming?” Harry asked.

Dobby shook his head. “Not to my knowledge. Why do you ask?”

Harry frowned a bit, while Dobby flashed him a bright smile. Harry quickly smiled back. “Excellent, my young apprentice.” Harry nodded. “Excellent.”

Hermione dropped her head. “Oh lord, it’s an epidemic.”

Tonks stomach rumbled a bit and she blushed. “Belly is ahh... just saying ‘Hello’.”

Harry’s stomach rumbled back as he smiled. “Does he want to shake hands?”

Simon looked confused while Hermione, Ginny, and Tonks all replied “No!”

“Come on. Let’s have some of this small meal.” Harry encouraged.

Hermione fell into her old role of prefect and was giving excessive information about all the aspects of the castle on the walk to the Great Hall. Simon had given Aunt Hermy a few funny looks when she would rattle off a dozen useless facts without taking a breath.

“Headmaster.” Harry exclaimed as they arrived at the staff table for dining. “I would like you to meet Simon. Simon this is the Headmaster of Hogwarts but you can call him Uncle Old, if you prefer.”

Albus frowned and snapped a pouting face at Harry. “Pleasure to meet you, Simon. Please call me Albus.” He said extending a hand down to shake with the young boy.

Simon shook his hand and said, “Nice to meet you too, Uncle Old Albus.”



Harry smiled realizing Simon was just doing what both Uncle's said to. But he probably irked the Headmaster, so mission accomplished. "Will anyone else be joining us for dinner, Albus?"

Albus frowned at Harry and responded, "Minerva should be-"

"Kitty!" Simon yelled. He ran up to the cat making her way towards the staff table. The cat looked terrified for a second with the young boy running at her. Simon fell to the ground right next to the cat, and began petting the top her head, and then rubbing at the bottom of her ears. The cat was obviously enjoying it, and when Simon started scratching under her chin, her motor was purring loud enough to echo in the Great Hall.

"Oh what a sweet little kitty cat." Simon cooed. "You are such a cute kitty. Yes you are. Yes you are."

The cat was adoring this attention. But the five adults in the room were watching the scene in shock.

"Hey Uncle Poncy! Hey Aunts Tonky! Aunts Hermy! Aunts Ginny! Hey Uncle Old Albus! Let me show what Healer Halper taught me." Simon yelled out to his dinner guests. He quickly stood up and picked up the kitty cat. He positioned each hand to be in between the kitty's legs, and lifted up spreading the cat out with front legs pointed straight forward and hind legs pointed straight backward.

Simon presented the kitty for inspection. "For the award show kitties, you lift them in the air like this, and examine the line right down its middle under here. See?" Simon said showing off the kitty's underbelly. "They'd usually give their haunches a good squeeze, but I'm not sure how this kitty would like that." Strangely enough the cat was not fighting this and seemed more in shock than anything.

Albus' face was twitching and doing all he could not to burst out laughing. A few irregular snorts of breath were unable to be contained. The three girls all had their hands covering their mouths and were smiling and nodding at Simon. Harry was just watching on in shock.

“And there’s one other thing that Healer Halper taught me about kitties.” Simon explained still hoisting the kitty up in the air. “Does anyone have a thermometer?”

That was the breaking point for the cat. For the first time anyone can remember, they actually heard a cat scream. Not screech but scream. It sounded almost like a donkey gargling.

Simon jumped back dropping the angry animal, scared the kitty might scratch him.

This was too much for the people at the table who all burst out laughing. There was a fast pop and the cat transformed into Minerva McGonagall, who was clutching at her heart and had extremely wide eyes.

Simon was not prepared for this and began screaming.

Minerva was not prepared for any more shocks, like say a small child yelling loudly, and screamed back at him. The two seemed to duel screams of fright while staring at each other. This did not last very long before Minerva remembered she was an adult, and all her colleagues were laughing at her.

Simon saw the cat-woman seemed to calm, and he took this opportunity to catch his breath.

Harry took the opportunity to interrupt them before they got going again, and introduced Simon to, “Professor Minerva McGonagall or Aunt Minnie.”

Everyone managed to calm down enough to eat dinner and Simon and Aunt Minnie hit it off spectacularly after that.

Albus and Harry were having a slightly hushed conversation. Unfortunately Minerva overheard one part, when Harry said to Albus, “I wonder how long it’s been since a man touched her haunches like that.”

Minerva didn't take too kindly to the comment and sent a semi-dark itching curse at Harry's unprotected back. As expected a ring appeared behind him and swallowed up the curse. "Professor McGonagall! Attacking my back, how Slytherin of you."

She hissed at Harry and brought up her non-wand hand to prepare to scratch him. When she realized what she was doing, she blushed a bit and put her hand down.

Simon backed away from Aunt Minnie since she was getting a little territorial.

Harry saw they were done with their meal and said, "Alright. We're running out of time before I promised the healers I would have Simon back by, so we're going to head off and do some guy stuff. No girls allowed."

The ladies at the table all playfully frowned, except for Minerva who was curling her lips.

"Oh goody!" Albus said rubbing his hands together. "What are we going to do?"

Harry smiled thinly. "Albus do you even remember when you were Simon's age?" Before Albus could retort, Harry continued, "Because I'm not sure the written word goes back that far. Maybe we could borrow your wand and count the rings in the wood. Might be able to pinpoint an era at least on you."

Minerva let out a proud snort at the pouting face Albus was making. Albus replied. "Fine. I can take a hint." Albus was frowning. "You may need to work on your subtlety though." And the Headmaster stuck out his tongue at Harry, making Simon giggle.

Harry and Simon got up and were just leaving the Great Hall when they bumped into someone.

"Luna," Harry happily exclaimed. "Fancy seeing you here." Harry eyed her a bit. "Have you been talking to Dobby?"

“Not to my knowledge,” Luna considered. “Why do you ask?”

Harry found that answer curious. “Oh, never mind. So what brings you here?”

Luna looked at Simon, and the teddy bear he was holding. “Is that Mr. Snarglepuss?”

Simon got defensive. “No. This is Harry.”

Luna turned to the man she had recognized as Harry. “Oh my apologies, Mr. Snarglepuss. I didn’t recognize you.”

Harry exhaled slowly and said. “For what it’s worth, I’m actually Harry, and that’s Simon’s new teddy bear that coincidentally has a striking resemblance to one of Malfoy’s.”

Luna smiled at Harry the man. “Good for you.”

“So why are you here, Luna? Come looking for anyone in particular?” Harry asked.

“Yes, actually I was needing some research help for an article for the Quibbler.” Luna explained. “Professor Snape assisted me on identifying a potion, and was giving me some quotes for the article. He became especially helpful, when he realized it was going to be an article about you.”

Harry groaned. “I’m not going to like this article, am I?”

Luna shrugged. “I don’t know. But I bet my Snorkack Food Delivery guy would appreciate it. I assumed you wished to maintain to deny all requests for an interview and use only ‘No Comment’ as usual?”

“Yeah. I think that’s probably for the best.” Harry said with a resigned nod. “So you got everything you needed from Snape?”

Luna shook her head. “Not yet. I was still asking him questions, when he got nailed in the eye by a vicious itching hex. He was flailing about

in pain, and I figured I could come up here and get some dinner while he took care of his little problem.”

Harry smiled. “You just left him there hurting?”

Luna nodded. “He’s so stubbornly proud he’d be angrier if I tried to help.”

Harry nodded. “True. Well enjoy your dinner. Me and Simon have some dangerous and slightly illegal things to do. See you later.” Harry picked up Simon and put Simon on his shoulders. “And if you can Luna, try and push the article to something small on a back page.”

Luna nodded and knew that wasn’t going to happen. She made her way up to the staff table and greeted everyone.

As Luna dug into her dinner, Tonks asked, “Umm, Luna?”

Luna looked up.

“Why did you call Harry, Mr. Snarglepuss?” Tonks finished.

Luna explained. “Well because he looks just like Draco’s teddy bear, Mr. Hendrick Von Snarglepuss the Third.”

Albus and Minerva both became quite interested in this conversation. “Might I ask how you came to know this?” Albus inquired.

Luna nodded. “Certainly.”

Albus was familiar with Miss Lovegood’s appreciation for the literal, and now with permission asked, “How did you come to know this?”

“Oh, because I got him for Draco,” Luna said. “And Draco told me what he named him.”

Ginny looked puzzled. “When did you and Draco get so close?”

Luna cocked her head at Ginny and replied. “When Harry asked me to be Draco’s mediwitch-slash-confidant.”

“What?” Hermione asked baffled. “You were Draco’s mediwitch? And confidant?”

“Yes.” Luna admitted. “I thought I just said that.”

Minerva asked, “Why would Draco need a mediwitch? And why you and not someone with more, ahem... credentials?”

“Well because no one could know about Draco’s injuries.” Luna noticed she was getting insufficient understanding, until the Headmaster’s eye’s widened and he said, “Ahh. Of course.”

They all turned to Albus curiously, hoping for a more clear explanation. “I believe she is referring to the constant bouts of Cruciatus, among other curses and injuries Draco received in his role as a spy.”

The four ladies all hadn’t really thought that much about what Draco had dealt with, but they certainly had seen what shape Severus was frequently in.

“I would imagine, Draco would need a consistent source of assistance, and it had to be someone Mr. Potter could completely trust, as well as be someone not in the Order, since Draco did not trust us or want us to know of his loyalties.” Albus merrily stated. “I’m not going to ask, but I’d like to think this was another reason you declined to join the Order, Miss Lovegood.”

Luna just smiled at them. “Draco did not have a particularly easy time of it. I figured giving him a teddy bear, a warm reminder of youth, would help Draco to open up and get his crying done in the times in which I was there to help him.”

Hermione looked a bit confused. “So... all this time... Draco is...”

Ginny continued. “Draco’s a nice guy and big sweetie underneath it all?”

“No.” Luna said shaking her head. “There isn’t any underneath it all. He’s really a poncy git.” Luna was nodding her head seriously now. “I wouldn’t be telling you these personal things about him if I didn’t think he was worse than a crotch-munching dillwilly.”

Minerva snorted again and shook her head with a smile. “Sometimes things are exactly what they seem.”

Tonks, Ginny, and Hermione were looking at Luna scandalously. Luna shrugged. “I’m thankful and appreciative of what the little ferret did. But that doesn’t give him the right to be such a cocky and annoying bugger.”

After all the evening’s latest revelations, no one’s opinion of either Draco or Luna changed too much.

Harry snuck into an unused classroom with Simon.

Simon asked, “Are we really going to do something illegal, Uncle Poncy?”

Harry shook his head. “Don’t worry, Simon. It’s not illegal.” Harry explained as Simon relaxed. “It is certainly questionable, but there are no laws against it. Mainly because no one thinks it’s even possible. If the Ministry knew it was possible, then, well, maybe...” Harry shook his head. “Ethics was never really a favorite subject of mine. Seemed to get in the way of ‘fun’ way too often.”

Simon smiled, liking the sound of this.

Harry grinned at the absence of apprehension from the young boy. “I was thinking about how you’re not supposed to use your own magic because it’s dangerous for you. So I thought I could give a little piece of magic from me that you could use all you want. And I realized for that to work, I’d first have to force the piece of magic to be compatible with your body, as well as make it a specific piece of magic, like one spell, or field of magic.”

Simon’s eyes lit up in wonder.

“Do you remember how Aunt Minnie can change her body into that of a cat, and then back into Aunt Minnie?”

Simon looked scared. “You’re going to turn me into Aunt Minnie!”

Harry smiled and shook his head.

Simon looked less scared. “You’re going to turn me into a cat?”

Harry was shaking his head. “No. No Aunt Minnie, no cat. Aunt Minnie is what’s called an animagus. She can transform into the animal that sort of befits her personality. I’m going to give you the magic necessary for the animagus transformation. It won’t be your own, but it will be a magic you can always do. But mainly when the healers aren’t looking.”

“But not a cat?”

Harry smiled at the young boy. “What you become isn’t something you control. You could be anything from a slug to lion.”

“So maybe a cat?”

Harry rolled his eyes. “Yes, a cat is a possibility, but you might not want to get your heart set on anything.”

Simon nodded. “Alright. I’m definitely looking forward to this. Magic is awesome.”

Harry settled himself in front of Simon. “Alright, I need you to look into my eyes, and just relax. This may feel a bit funny, and you will see and feel me in your head. But just trust me and it should be easy as a piece of pie.”

Harry stared into the young boy’s eyes for several minutes in silence and Simon was making a few goofy faces at the weird way Uncle Poncy was talking to him and touching him. Certainly not a bad touch, although it did feel a little queer.



Finally Harry said. "All done. It should work. All you should need to do now is to think in your head, 'Transform me, Uncle Poncy!' and you should painlessly pop into yo-"

And with a pop Simon was replaced with a young cute "Kitten. You actually are a cat. I'll be a monkey's uncle. Congratulations Simon." Harry explained. "You've just broken a few of the rules of magic."

The kitten scampered up to Harry and was rubbing his head up against Harry's leg. "I don't think there's ever been an animagus child before. So no puppies or kittens or anything like that ever before you. Aww, such a sweet puddytat." Harry was rubbing Simon's ears softly.

"To change back, just think the same thing: 'Transform me, Uncle-'"

With a pop, Simon reappeared as his normal self. Complete with his normal face-splitting wide smile.

"-Poncy. Yeah I think you've got the hang of it. Turn back and forth again. Real fast."

Two pops, with a brief meow in between, and Simon was running up to hug his Uncle Poncy.

Harry hugged Simon back. "No soreness or tiredness? Right? Transforming is every bit as easy as the first time? No sluggishness?"

Simon popped back into his kitten form and licked his sandpaper like tongue on Uncle Poncy before popping back into a nine year old boy. "Nope. This is awesome!"

"I'm glad you like it Simon. Now remember, try and keep this our secret. Transform when no one's watching. Like I said, it's not illegal, but mainly because it's not supposed to be possible. Now I've got to get you back. I promised your healers."

"Alright, Uncle Poncy. Today's been the greatest." Simon said extending his arms. Harry smiled back at Simon and put him back up on his shoulders. With a pop, Harry disappeared from Hogwarts and

reappeared at the healer's station to the long term children's care ward.

Harry set Simon down. "I had a lot of fun today Simon. I'm not sure if I'll be able to see you again soon, but I will definitely see you at the party next Saturday."

Simon hugged him tightly. "Thanks Uncle Poncy." He whispered into his ear. "I won't let anyone see me transform."

Simon ran off into his room.

A man who had been at the desk when they arrived approached Harry. "Mr. Potter. I trust you had a good day with Simon?"

"Yes, sir. I think we all had fun."

"Oh excuse me for not introducing myself. I'm Healer Halper. Call me Santos," the man said extending a hand.

Harry shook it firmly. "Pleasure to meet you, Santos. First I need to inform you that next Saturday the Party at Malfoy Manor, that Simon won, is scheduled. All the children in the ward have been invited."

Santos smiled. "Wonderful. Simon has been trying to have that party for a while and I know the kids will be looking forward to it."

Harry smiled and looked at the man seriously. "Simon told me he's not supposed to do any magic. Can you tell me more about what afflicts him?"

Healer Halper nodded. "When Simon was just a toddler, his family was attacked by Dark Wizards. From what we can tell, his mother tried to protect him and took the brunt of several dark curses, including flesh eating, blood boiling, and some sort of acid. As a result Simon's entire magical core seems to have been surrounded and, for lack of a better term, infected by the magic."

Harry nodded indicating he understood and wished Santos to continue.

“As a result, Simon’s magic has sort of become tainted. Somewhat similar to muggle cancer, in that it is his own magic turning against him. If he were to accidentally expend magic that was tainted, it would spread infinitely faster.” Santos paused and then continued. “In truth we need for him to grow magical muscles and get them a lot of solid use, for his clean magic to even be able to overcome the tainted magic. Most likely, the only way to do that would be to use potions to force magical maturity, once he’s old enough that forcing his body to it’s current maturity will provide it somewhat adequate protection over the tainted magic. He’s many years away before we can even risk that though, and even forcing that could potentially trigger the taint to grow. Until then we just have to keep an eye on him, and hope he doesn’t hit the wrong bit of magic.”

Harry nodded and was thinking pensively. “So, theoretically, if we could get his magical muscles pumping a guaranteed clean source of magic, it would strengthen him up sufficiently on his own, right?”

Santos considered it and agreed. “Were it possible for him to have a magic ‘transfusion’ of sorts, then yes that could potentially work. But unless you know something I don’t about how to transfuse magic, then I’m not sure what sort of hope you can have.”

Harry bit his tongue, and avoided the healer’s eyes. “Why don’t you do me a favor, and just check up on his magical muscles, and see if Simon doesn’t start showing signs of improvement soon.”

Santos dropped his head. “Oh dear, Mr. Potter. What have you done now?”

“Hey! I didn’t do anything.” Harry mistakenly punctuated this with a wide-eyed gulp. He was pointing over Santos’ shoulder and said loudly, “I had nothing to do with that!”

Santos turned around and spotted a cute smiling kitten chasing after a sock in the hallway. The kitten looked familiar to Santos, but he wasn’t sure from where. He turned back towards Harry only to find Harry had disappeared, and Santos was standing alone in the

hallway. He turned back around and watched the kitten push his way into Simon's room and, in an impressive move for a kitten, shut the door behind him.

When Healer Halper looked into Simon's room he saw the young boy smiling widely sitting on the bed looking as innocent as he could with a scratched up sock in his hand. Healer Halper took a deep breath and decided he probably didn't want to know.

Two days later, Harry received a complimentary copy of The Quibbler from Luna, with a note attached that said only, "I've heard the customer always comes first, but sometimes these things are beyond our control. Especially if it's been a while since you've had a customer."

### The Quibbler

The Secret to Immortality: Shag Harry Potter!

An anonymous source has provided The Quibbler with startling evidence. Apparently the already legendary loins of the Light Lord Harry Potter are rumored to actually produce the mythical Elixir of Life. Mr. Potter denied interview and comment, so this has not been confirmed first hand yet. But the tip and information came with a small vial. A careful breakdown and analysis of the liquid in the vial by Potions Master Severus Snape revealed it actually was a particularly salty version of the famed Elixir of Life. The Elixir of Life was previously believed only made possible with a Philosopher's Stone, and was not believed to be naturally occurring at all. The last known Philosopher's Stone, created by Nicholas Flamel, was destroyed almost a decade ago. Little is known about the Elixir of Life, but Potions Master Snape assures that the shelf life of it is significantly less than a couple of years. "I cannot explain the existence of this liquid. It shouldn't be possible."

When confronted with whether Potions Master Snape believed the tip and rumor about Mr. Potter, he responded, "I sincerely doubt his body is manufacturing Elixir of Life. He is ridiculously powerful, so the possibility is there. But truthfully, I would guess it more likely that he's just dispensing a strong pepper-up potion at best. Or perhaps a new hangover cure."

Stranger things have happened to Mr. Potter. All of his close friends agree, with Harry Potter, anything is possible. Mr. Potter has been the nation's Most Eligible Bachelor ever since he became of age. And it seems what it really boils down to is this: Is immortality really worth it, if it means an eternity of shagging Harry Potter? An informal poll showed 112 percent of responding witches said yes. As well as 71 percent of responding wizards.

A grumpy Harry Potter set down the article and sighed loudly. "This year is going to suck."

## CHAPTER FOUR

“Hey, Harry?”

“What’s up, Neville?”

“I was just wondering... err...” Neville was blushing a bit. “Are you gay?”

“If you’re asking if I fancy blokes,” Harry carefully replied, “then the answer would be a relatively firm but secretly curious ‘no’.”

Neville smiled and exhaled loudly. “Oh phew! That’s a relief.”

Harry looked puzzled. “I never took you for the homophobic type, Nev.”

Neville frowned before adopting a look of surprise. “Oh! No,” Neville shook his head. “No. It’s not that. It’s,” Neville sighed. “It’s my parents.”

“You’re parents are homophobic?” Harry asked. Harry cocked his head to the side. “You’re not gay, are you, Nev?”

Neville looked frightened. “What? No. Noooooo. And praise be to Potter, that you aren’t either.”

Harry dropped his head in his hands. “Nev, do you even realize how absolutely ridiculous that last statement was.”

Nev smiled sheepishly. “Sorry. It’s kind of catchy, you have to admit. After a while you just get tired of swearing to Merlin. Praising Potter offers a welcome alternative.”

Harry just stared at Neville angrily.

Neville shrugged, relatively unconcerned.

“Wait,” Harry remembered. “So why are your parents homophobic?”

Neville smiled. "Oh they're not. In fact, they were especially supportive of the idea last night." Neville was shaking his head. "I'm not sure how the discussion turned into what it did, but, well, long story short, my parents talked me into trying to get you to bugger me."

Harry looked at Neville a bit incredulously.

Neville shrugged. "I can't even remember how we got to that point, but apparently someone swore on their magic that I would turn on the charm, and show you just why we're called Longbottoms."

Harry remained silent and continued to stare at Neville.

"Don't worry," Neville assured him. "We're both safe and in the clear, since you're not gay."

"Neville," Harry slowly responded. "Your family is beginning to scare me."

Neville agreed with a vigorous nod. "I don't know what do. I mean I always dreamed they'd be there for me and love me and support me, but..." Neville winced a little. "They're not what I expected at all."

Harry nodded. "I know what you mean. I used to have all sorts of ideas and impressions about the sort of people my parents were, but they're all based off either a best friend's biased point of view. Or a completely bitter, angry, immature, Snapish point of view."

"Yeah, that's what I mean." Neville agreed. "I mean I love my Mum and Dad and always will. But sometimes, they treat me like a little kid."

Harry smiled sympathetically. "They're probably going to still be adjusting for a long while."

"Yeah, I know." Neville frowned. "I just wished they'd let me order from the adult menus at restaurants and stop slipping booster seats in my chair when I go to the restroom."

Harry furrowed his brow a bit and paused before saying, "Yep. Definitely scaring me a little."

Neville continued. "It's gotten worse since I let Mum share some of my gardens. She's super protective of her little area. Got disillusionment charms covering it even." Neville shook his head. "And all she's growing is one muggle herb that's used for healing! Not even anything magical. It's just ten square meters of this stuff called Cannabis."

Harry restrained his smile as best he could. "Cannabis, eh?"

Neville nodded. "Yeah. Both my parents swear by that muggle stuff. I think they use it spice up desserts as much as for healing." Neville looked thoughtful. "Every time I ask the Earth Element about it, she just giggles at me and avoids the question."

Harry smiled and asked. "So you haven't tried the herb yet?"

Neville shook his head. "I've not been sick and needed any yet. Though last night I did have some brownies that I think Mum may have spiced with it." Neville smiled big. "They were absolutely delicious. I must have had a half dozen of them." Neville frowned a bit. "Come to think of it, so did Mum and Dad. That was when we started laughing about the Quibbler article on you, and then Mum seemed to think it could be true. Finally she and Dad complained about the brownies being gone. Then they got real sad about people that had died. Somehow the conversation went back to you and Mum and Dad started making our wedding plans. Dad kept telling me 'It only hurts the first time, and some risks are worth the rewards.' I'm not too sure on many other details. My memory's a bit hazy. Though I think we played Exploding Snap on somebody's bare back. Next thing I know, Yuppy, our house-elf was putting me to bed."

Harry smiled and laughed. "I'm beginning to think that you're trying to scare me, Nev."

Neville was shaking his head. "Muggle herbs must be more powerful than I thought. Maybe we should get some for the Hogwarts' elves to



help flavor up some of their desserts? Could be a big hit at the start of term feast.”

Harry bit his bottom lip and calmly replied. “That is an absolutely excellent idea, Neville. If I were you, I’d just try and make it a surprise. Don’t let the rest of the staff know, and see if they notice anything tastier about the feast.”

Neville smiled at Harry. “Good thinking. I won’t even tell the Headmaster. So you have to keep this secret too then.”

Harry was trying not to titter. “My lips are sealed.”

“Great!” Neville said getting up to leave the DADA office. “Thanks Harry.”

“No problem, Neville.” Harry replied. “Have a good day.”

“You too Harry,” Neville called out as he was leaving the office. “And thanks for not being gay.”

“My pleasure?” Harry uncertainly responded.

It was only minutes later than the self-proclaimed King of Sneers hurried into the DADA office.

“Potter!” He yelled before yelping and slapping at the phoenix tattoo on his arm. “Gah...you... fine. Harry.”

“Severus.” Harry responded with a nod.

“I was wanting to talk to Nicholas, but do not know how to contact him.” Severus stated with a friendly sneer.

“He’s not very easy to track down sometimes.” Harry agreed wryly. “Can I ask what this is about? I might be able to help you.”

“I’m sure you enjoyed the exclusive that The Quibbler published yesterday.” Severus said with a grin.

Harry frowned and growled at Severus before retorting, "Oh? Is that why you're here? Need a hangover cure?"

Snape sneered a smile at Harry until he heard the sound of a zipper going down right behind his ear. His smile thinned and his eyes widened. That was an impressive piece of magic considering Harry been staring at Severus and never made a movement or sound.

"Err, some other time, maybe. Actually I wanted to ask him how the hell there can be Elixir of Life, which has an eighteen month shelf life, when his stone was supposed to have been destroyed after your first year." Severus explained.

"Ahh," Harry said with a small smile. "I can offer two logical possibilities to that. Neither of which involves any of my bodily fluids."

Severus gave a surprised sneer. "Do tell."

"One possibility," Harry began, "is that my friend, Bob, lied straight to my face about my missing sample of the potion." Harry explained offhandedly, "I had some specially made, for testing purposes with the Dementor Blood. The stone used to make it, for all intents and purposes, does not exist in this reality. And I swore one of my samples disappeared, though Bob denied any involvement."

Snape's surprised sneer turned into a confused sneer. He had never heard of any Bob, and certainly not one that Harry would know and trust that well.

"The other possibility, is that the stone in the muggle world has been found by someone who recognized it for what it is." Harry said perfectly normally.

"What!" Severus exclaimed dropping his sneer. "You're telling me some idiot muggle has a Philosopher's Stone and doesn't even know what it is?"

Harry chuckled. "One of those things, where Nicholas woke up the next day and only then realized what he'd done." Harry shook his head, "a small blemish on an otherwise spotless record."

A conniving sneer spread across Severus's face. "I can tell you know, so please share with me this story."

Harry nodded and was quietly snickering. "It's not a very long story. Nicholas was drinking. A little too much. Among muggles. And I quote 'The most seductive alluring whore to ever walk this earth.' Nicholas was too drunk to get any muggle money. So he apparently had enough control over his magic to conjure an exquisite chain, but never thought to conjure money. Bargained like he was at the market until he got the full night, in exchange for this priceless jewel and necklace. He called it the 'Heart of the Ocean' and the poor girl fell for it hook, line, and sinker."

Severus's sneer was locked in place as he wasn't really making any movements. Finally his eyes made a popping sound and he said, "He traded a Philosopher's Stone for a night with a whore."

Harry nodded. "Yup. Said it was worth it too."

Severus raised an eyebrow at that.

"I'm guessing that back then they weren't as good at it as we are these days." Harry suggested.

Snape stared at Harry. "Right."

"Anyways," Harry said getting back on track, "if you wanted to write him, or have me pass along anything I can. But it's kind of up to him if he wants you to be able to contact him directly." Harry paused and added, "old guy, so he gets to be picky."

Severus frowned and shook his head slightly. "No, that won't be necessary. I think you adequately addressed my -"

"Put up your occlumency shields to full," Harry quickly ordered.

Severus' eyes widened and he immediately reinforced all his mind's protections. A cold chill ran through his body, and a familiar memory

was on the edges of his consciousness. The DADA office darkened and mist was seeping in from the door.

A rough, raspy voice called out, “Potterrrr.” It hissed out. “Potterrrrrrrr.” It continued. The voice was so grating it felt itchy. “Potterrrrrrrrrrrrrr.”

And just as Severus knew was coming, a massive dementor entered the DADA office. It was bigger than any dementor Snape had ever seen before, and it literally pulsed with magical power.

“Eattttt. Deathhhhhh. Soulllllll. Potterrrrrrrrrrrrrr.” The Dementor said with a deep rattling rumble.

Harry kept his calm eyes on the Dementor. “Severus, I’m going to have to ask you to leave. This dementor can’t hold back his abilities much longer, and I think you would much prefer to walk out of here than pass out.”

Severus grit his teeth in a sneer. “He’s holding them back? Are you serious?”

Harry gave the dementor a look that seemed to communicate something and the dementor turned to Severus and looked straight through him.

Severus felt a wave pass over him and his entire consciousness seemed to freeze instantly. And at that moment he knew quite clearly, this creature before him could completely and utterly destroy him as easily as Severus could breathe.

And there under the shade of the dementor's hood was a swirl of darkness that was blacker than any color Severus had ever imagined. And the raspy voice seemed to become a little quieter, though it was still every bit as disconcerting as before. "Ssssssssyphilissss Sssssssnape." The voice hissed out.

Severus meekly turned his head towards Harry and said nothing but communicated the message with just his eyes. He then jumped out of his seat and quickly left the DADA office.

Harry was glad his occlumency shields were up and he managed to contain his snort when the Potions Master was called a sexually transmitted disease. The lack of sneer on his face and completely bugged out eyes was an image Harry was going to remember for the rest of his life. Once Severus was galloping away down the hall, Harry cast a few spells and wards to ensure privacy. Now it was a matter of dealing with this dementor.

Harry quirked his mouth in a reluctant smile. "It's safe now." Harry looked down and shook his head. "Eat, Death, Soul, Potter? That's the best you can come up with?"

The dementor began coughing and hacking. "Hey, I thought you might be alone until I sensed talk, dark, and sneering in here. I had to improvise." It coughed loudly and seemed to be working through some phlegmy expectorant. "Using that voice just tears my throat up." The dementor coughed and cleared his throat a few times. "Do, Re, Mi, Fa, So, La, Ti, Do. Do. Do."

"For goodness sake, Bob. You're not singing at the opera house." An irritated but smiling Harry was shaking his head. "I swear. I don't know how you dementors managed to get your present public image, because when the cameras are off, you're such a pantywaist."

"Be nice." Bob the dementor warned though he was smiling. Bob's voice sounded surprisingly normal for a middle-aged Englishman. There was the occasional lisp on his S's and TH's but there are some things you try not to notice, as dementors can be extremely sensitive. Naturally feeding on emotions, would make even the most testosterone-filled males, more in touch with other people's feelings. One thing you must always be aware of, when befriending a dementor, is never, under any circumstances call a dementor metrosexual. It's like asking a woman if she got fatter since you last saw her. Both of those dire situations have at the least a minimum cost of your soul.

"You lied to me." Harry stated evenly. "You took a nearly priceless substance from me and then lied about it."

Bob raised a gnarled bony hand and waved Harry off. "Pfff."

Harry shook his head. "And you also called Severus a STD and scared him worse than Tom ever did." Harry smiled. "So I suppose I can forgive your thievery and lying." Harry's face fell into a quick frown. "But you have also insured that I will continue to be bothered and hounded by the press and power hungry whores across the world for the rest of my natural life." Harry's eyes glittered dangerously.

Bob gulped.

Harry's lips curled and his teeth were showing. "And that, my friend... is unforgivable."

Bob was thinking he may have gone too far. "Listen, Harry, buddy...hehe... it...it..." Bob was stuttering. "It was just a joke... I can fess up. We can get them to print a retraction." Bob was rambling. "We can, we can fix this."

Harry's eyes were swirling with power and his teeth were clenched. He was watching Bob intently, like a jungle cat eyeing up its dinner. And then Harry couldn't take it anymore and burst out laughing.

Bob's unease turned to confusion mixed with relief.

Harry was still snickering at the uncertainty he could sense from Bob. "I was kidding there, Bob. Relax. With as much as I prank others, I'd be pretty hypocritical if I couldn't take a joke." Harry was laughing. "And even I'd admit, starting a rumor that I manufacture Elixir of Life is hilarious."

Bob was snickering now too. "Yeah, it was really good, wasn't it?"

"It's stupid enough for people to believe it, and frustrating enough to make my life more difficult. A success in every way." Harry admitted. "And sadly I can't even embarrass you publicly, seeing as you're supposed to be a big bad evil dementor."

Bob leaned forward to take a small bow. "Thank you. Thank you."

“Ah crap. Hermione and Tonks are coming. Put on your game face, Bob. I’ll see what they want.”

Bob quickly stood back up and smoothed out his cloak. He patted it a fair amount to get the mist swirling in the air again while Harry walked to the office door and went to intercept his friends.

“Tonks! Hermy! Good to see you guys, but right now isn’t a very good time.” Harry greeted them briskly.

Tonks smirked. “Not a good time? You got company you’re trying to hide from us?”

Hermione began rubbing her arms for warmth. “Why’s it so cold down here?”

“Yes I have company, and I don’t think you two would like meeting my company. More than likely it would upset you.”

Hermione frowned. “Why is that? Some fan girl read the latest article and confirming things first hand?”

Tonks harrumphed. “What’s so special about her anyway? She prettier than us?”

Harry shrugged. “If you really want to meet my guest, go for it. But remember I warned you.”

Tonks shifted her form into an almost veela-looking beauty with a young firm body and walked proudly into the DADA office. Immediately after crossing the threshold to the office she fell to her knees shivering from the effects of the dementor.

Hermione too whipped her head left and then right to make sure her hair looked good and went into the office. Her reaction wasn’t as severe as Tonks, but she lost all the color and was leaning against the door to keep upright.

The dementor turned its head towards the two girls. A warbled skritch voice said "Potterrrrrr." The dementor glided a step closer to the girls, but stopped when it saw Hermione fall to her knees too. "Mmmmmmate." It rasped. "Jjjjjjjjuice."

Harry knew he wasn't going to be able to watch Bob play the role expected of him without breaking out laughing, so he quickly pulled his two female colleagues out of his office, and once past the doorjamb the effects were almost completely muted.

Both of them threw themselves at Harry and were squeezing him for all the warmth they could get out of him.

Hermione pulled herself together first and slapped Harry on the shoulder. "That was awful. Why didn't you just tell us your company was the most powerful dementor I've ever seen?"

Harry was rubbing soothing circles on Tonks' back. "Would you have believed me?"

Hermione huffed. "That's hardly the point."

Harry smiled innocently. "Well I tried to warn you, that you probably wouldn't like meeting him."

Two sharp frowns were shot Harry's way. "Anyways," Harry said, "I would like to finish with my guest. Why don't you two go to the kitchens and get some hot chocolate. I'll track you guys down when I'm done here."

The two girls were still a bit miffed with Harry, but the idea of hot chocolate sounded wonderful to them. A couple of grumbled agreements and the girls bid their cheeky friend goodbye.

Harry walked back into the office to see an veritable maelstrom of dark and ambient energy swirling around the impressive creature. Harry rolled his eyes at the display. "They're gone."

"Crap." Bob responded and let his aura dissipate. "And I was really strutting my stuff in here."



Harry smiled at his friend. "And mate juice? Really?" He was shaking his head. "I think we need to work on your improv."

"What can I say?" Bob defended. "They were hot. And I'm a dementor. We're not exactly known for our creativity."

## CHAPTER FIVE

“Please tell me you didn’t get any dragons.”

Harry smirked. “It’s your lucky day, Malfoy. I didn’t get any dragons.”

Draco frowned. “Please don’t smirk. That really doesn’t bode well for the children’s safety.”

“Relax,” Harry admonished his occasional friend. “If there’s an outcry for dragons, I can turn into one and start giving rides.”

“Careful, Harry,” Remus said with a smile. “There’s already one suspected child molester throwing this party. Let’s not start more rumors about what sorts of rides you’re giving children.”

Draco and Harry both groaned simultaneously, turned to each other, and immediately stopped.

“And since when can you turn into a dragon?” Draco jealously asked.

Harry rolled his eyes. “The girls should be getting here at the same time as the children in about ten minutes. So our dangerous beasts should be arriving soon. And the clowns I hired will probably be fashionably late.”

“Dangerous beasts?” Draco asked meekly.

“Clowns?” Remus inquired frightfully.

Harry was surprised. “Moony! Are you scared of clowns?”

Remus frowned. “They’re freaky, okay? I saw a muggle movie when I was young.”

“Sorry Moony,” Harry said, though he didn’t look it. “I doubt these clowns are the kind you’re worried about, but,” Harry admitted grudgingly, “they are scary.”

“Dangerous beasts?” Draco repeated a bit more firmly.

Harry smiled and shook his head. “They’re not dangerous ...unless you piss them off. They’re just-” Harry stopped and looked up in the sky above the grounds at Malfoy Manor. “Here they are.”

Draco turned in the direction Harry was looking. “No way, Potter. You have got to be kidding me.”

Harry just smiled at Draco. “The kids will love them. Way better than ponies.”

“But ponies won’t eat you!” Draco angrily replied.

Remus smiled recognizing a familiar face in the sky.

The large creatures landed, with a most notable one in the lead. It gracefully approached Harry.

Harry couldn’t stop grinning to save his life. “I know it’s been a few years, but Draco, you remember Buckbeak, don’t you?”

Draco’s eyes nearly popped out of their sockets upon the realization of just exactly who this particular hippogriff was. “You’re... You’re supposed to be dead!”

This was apparently not the best way to greet the proud creature. Buckbeak roared out a displeased squawk. Draco briefly entertained the notion of trying to remember the proper way to deal with this particular beast, before giving in to his Slytherin nature, and turning tail and sprinting away as fast as his pale little chicken legs could carry him.

Buckbeak, by most standards was domesticated, and knew today was for the youngsters. But even he felt a few rounds of chase the ferret would be necessary to get through the day.

Harry and Remus just chuckled to themselves as Draco was trying to run in zigzags in an effort to confuse and avoid the rampaging hippogriff chasing after him. Harry turned and looked at the three

other hippogriffs that came with Buckbeak. They puffed themselves up proudly when they realized they were being observed, though not quick enough for Harry to miss the snorts of amusement they had been making.

Remus' smile faltered and he asked, "You didn't really hire any clowns, did you?" Remus' eyes were pleading. "Because I'm not sure I'm ready to deal with that."

Harry was filing this information for later. There's something infinitely satisfying about scaring the crap out of your close friends. "No worries, Remus. I didn't hire anybody. Just a couple of clowns volunteered their time when I respectfully asked them to. These aren't the kind in make-up, baggy outfits, oversized shoes, or pod creatures destroying all humankind."

Remus shivered involuntarily.

Before Harry could ask anything else, dozens of children of varying ages appeared with their invitation portkeys. Aunt Ginny, Aunt Hermy, and Aunt Tonky arrived with the official host of the party, Simon.

Simon stood back up after falling from the portkey trip, and ran to give Harry a hug, yelling, "Uncle Poncy!"

The three ladies looked at Harry intently. They were not looking very happy at all. Hermione in particular. Before Hermione could begin any sort of angry rant, Tonks asked, "Where's my cuz? Isn't he supposed to be co-hosting this?"

Hermione's anger seemed to have abated a bit as she too looked around wondering the same thing.

Harry smiled one of his particularly scary smiles and said, "He's catching up with an old friend. One he thought was dead and hadn't seen for years."

The girls were momentarily confused. But only until a piercing girlish shriek was heard getting louder and louder. It was building to a crescendo when Draco Malfoy became visible, sprinting away from

around the back of his Manor. His clothes were torn and it appeared his body was covered with shallow cuts, as if he had been sprinting through a thorn field. About twenty feet behind him was a sprinting hippogriff all three girls immediately recognized. Tonks, Hermione, and Ginny were laughing almost as loudly as all the children were. Even if you don't speak the same language, a man running in fright and screaming a high-pitched girlish scream is always funny.

Draco was making some hilarious faces. He would turn towards Harry to stare angrily, but he kept having to watch where he was going as he did have a rampaging beast chasing after him. As a result he was snapping his head back and forth, rotating between facial expressions of undiluted terror and an indignant angry scowl.

Harry decided to be a nice guy and winked at Simon and the girls. "Watch this."

Harry scrunched his face in concentration and yanked at something invisible in the air. With a loud pop Draco disappeared in mid stride, and reappeared right next to Harry with just enough momentum to trail off his girlish scream into a yelp before he landed face first on the ground.

"Great Merlin, Potter." A huffing, but obviously relieved Malfoy got up off the ground and was dusting his robes clean. "There's a reason you're not supposed to force apparate someone who is sprinting. Especially through anti-apparition wards! Stop doing that Potter. You're going to scramble my brain one of these times."

"Oh pish-posh," Harry scolded. "You're fine." Harry looked him over. "Well maybe a scratch or two, but those weren't my fault."

Draco growled realizing just how undignified he looked.

"Simon," Draco said bowing imperiously, "welcome to Malfoy Manor. I am pleased to see you and all your guests have arrived unharmed." Draco snarled a little at Harry. "With your Uncle Poncy here, there's no guarantees they will be able to leave in as good condition."

Harry gave Draco one of those looks he picked up from the Headmaster. A look that says: If you act like a child, you will be treated as such. "Come on, Simon. Let me introduce you and everyone else to Buckbeak. If you guys treat the hippogriffs well, you might even get to ride one."

"Really?" Simon asked quietly. "That'd be awesome!"

"An adult will need to ride with you, but if you treat the hippogriffs with respect they will probably let you ride them. Buckbeak here let me ride him the first time I met him." Harry explained.

Draco was keeping his distance from the savage beasts, but all the rest of the adults, including Harry, Remus, Ginny, Tonks, and Hermione, were happily introducing the children to the hippogriffs and teaching them about the magnificent creatures.

The children were all extremely careful and were bowing every few seconds to the hippogriffs. After a while, even the hippogriffs were getting tired of the excessive respect they were shown. Buckbeak rested his head on Harry's shoulder, and Harry got the message. The hippogriffs allowed the adults to help the kids mount and ride them. And the children were all screaming with excitement and exhilaration.

After all the kids had gotten to ride on a hippogriff, many of them in awe, because they got to ride with the Harry Potter, everyone was settling down in the shade of a large tree. House elves brought out all kinds of snacks and juices for the kids. They were going to have dinner later, and follow it with cake and ice cream.

While they were relaxing in the shade, loud horns began tooting. The sound was growing in volume, announcing an arrival. Right as the horns blared their peaks there was a large explosion in front of them and massive volumes of thick orange smoke. Two identical but very familiar voices yelled out "Ta-da!" just as the smoke was clearing. One was wearing a neon purple spandex body suit with a blue cape billowing in a nonexistent wind. The other was wearing a lime green spandex body suit with a blue cape billowing in another nonexistent wind. In the off chance someone didn't notice their very indicative hair color, and couldn't recognize them with their goggles on, then at least

they surely would have read The Quibbler article about their immaculately conceived pet Dalmatian. Who was looking quite dashing in his blue cape billowing in a nonexistent wind.

“Greetings,” the one in green spandex began.

“And salutations,” the one in purple quickly added.

The one in green continued, “My name is Gred.”

“My name is Forge,” the one in purple mimicked.

“Forge,” Gred began, “why don’t you inform the co-host of this party, and Lord of the Manor, about our little...ahem...”

“Situation?” Forge offered.

“I was going to say ‘pickle’, but that works as well.” Gred said with a nod.

Forge waved to Draco and walked off to talk to him.

Draco couldn’t hide his look of fear. He was seriously thinking he would need to sell this place and move before this party was over. “Hiya Draco,” Forge began.

“Weasley,” Draco said with a tired sigh.

“Not going to guess which one I am?” Forge asked.

“Does it matter?” Draco responded.

Forge began to talk and stopped himself. “Hmm. I was going to say, it does matter to us, but I’m not even too sure about that.”

Draco turned his head and thought for a second he saw something run past the window in the Manor.

“Anyways,” Forge stated. “We brought a ... umm ... large contingent of nifflers with us for a trick. And some of them escaped from their cages when we weren’t paying attention.”

Draco groaned. “Little pests are annoying, but we can have the gardeners take care of them.”

Forge winced and added. “See the problem is, I’m pretty sure they went through your back door’s doggie door. But it’s nothing to worry about unless you have something shiny in your house.”

Draco was angry and then confused. “I don’t have a doggie door.”

“Oh,” Forge said with his eyes twinkling. “Then I guess one must have burrowed through your door and then Buckbeak chased after him. And the rest just hopped through the massive hippogriff shaped hole instead.”

Draco whimpered a bit as he processed this. A few seconds of silence, before Draco’s eyes widened and he turned and sprinted into his manor as quickly as he possibly could.

Forge made his way back to the kids and found Gred was making balloon animals for the kids. From the look of it, Gred wasn’t very good at balloon animals as another kid settled for a snake just like everybody else.

“Forge!” Gred yelled out.

“Gred!” Forge responded.

“Come on, Forge,” Gred said. “We have got to talk behind the tree over here.”

The kids all turned and heard Gred and Forge arguing behind the tree. From the sound of it, they were hurting themselves a bit too. Slowly the pair walked back around the tree. They didn’t appear any different, but they were walking extremely cautiously almost like zombies.

“This is freaky, Gred,” Gred said.



“Actually, I think I’m Forge and you’re Gred,” Forge replied.

“Oh ... right.” Gred agreed.

Forge then raised his right arm and stuck out his pinky. “Hey! What are you doing?” Forge said apparently talking to his pinky. He was slowly raising it closer to his face. “Cut it out!” Forge yelled before firmly jamming his pinky up his own nostril.

“Oh my god, this is grody.” Gred exclaimed.

Forge slowly pulled his pinky out of his nose, and there was a piece of snot clinging to it. Forge appeared scared of the clinging boogie, and began moaning, “No, no,” while wiping his pinky into his own hair.

To the children, this was the epitome of high brow comedy. Those low brow comics always go back to the doody. The kids were absolutely loving this, while the girls looked thoroughly scared. Harry kept snickering though, because he knew exactly what was going on, unlike everyone else not in spandex.

Forge growled despite the snot in his hair. “Alright, that’s it,” he said. And then Gred ran over to Forge and kicked him right on the shin. “Owwwww!” Gred yelled while Forge fell to the ground clenching his bruised shin.

Forge was rolling on the ground and seemed to mashing his own face into the dirt. Forge was muffledly swearing to both himself and Gred. “Useless... bloody... wanker...”

Forge stopped rolling his own face into the dirt and used this pause to yell at Gred, “Are you gonna behave long enough so I can help us up?”

“Fine,” Gred grumbled and walked over to offer a hand to Forge on the ground.

Forge on the other hand, was waiting until Gred got closer, and as soon as he did, he quickly rolled over, jumped up and laid into Gred the hardest loudest uppercut any of the kids had ever seen.

Gred's head popped clean off his body, taking the blue cape with it. As the head flew through the air, it smiled and yelled out, "Got it!"

Apparently watching a man decapitated with a punch, and a severed head smiling and yelling was not expected. The kids' laughter turned quickly into screams. The matter was not improved upon when Tonks began flailing her arms and screaming even louder.

Gred's head landed with a thud and rolled to a stop at a pale Ginny's feet. The head ended up staring at Ginny with a smile and said, "Wow, Gin. You've really sprouted some breasts, haven't you?"

Ginny let out a frightened whimper, while Tonks ran from the head.

Gred's headless body stumbled over and managed to pick up his head with blue cape billowing in a nonexistent wind. The body lifted the head, and in a remarkable feat of hand-eye coordination, threw the head arcing high through the air. The head's eyes were wide and it yelled out "Tonks," who managed to turn around just in time to get head butted in a way never before thought possible. There was a loud thud as one face smashed into the other. Tonks frightened screams seemed to have settled her right on the edge of catatonic shock.

Somewhere in this ridiculous mess, the still whole body of Forge and Harry Potter were both completely cracking up in gales of laughter. The children's screams of horror, also shifted into laughter and screams of delight. Hermione seemed to have worked out what was going on and her skin tone was regaining some color. Ginny appeared sickly pale and was especially skittish. Tonks on the other hand seemed almost a broken shell of a person.

Gred's headless body stumbled over and picked up Gred's decapitated head again. He was holding the head in front of him, aiming it towards Tonks. The head said, "You're okay, Tonks. Just

having a spot of fun for the kids.” Tonks showed little response, and the headless body and Forge both shrugged.

“Are you kids alright?” the floating head of Gred asked.

They all giggled and laughed. Lots of smiles and nodding.

Forge added, “Now don’t you try this at home. Remember,”

The floating head finished, “We’re professionals.”

Forge called out to Gred, “Let’s get the right bodies, so we can take these itchy capes off.”

As Gred’s body walked up to Forge, Forge seemed to pinch a couple of spots under his cape, and deftly lifted his own head and cape off his shoulders into the air. Gred’s body and Forge’s body traded each other heads, and they settled them onto their bodies again. They fiddled a couple things under the cape again, and then pulled the cape’s a bit looser and pulled them over their heads. Both Gred and Forge turned their heads and necks around, loosening the muscles, and they in unison yelled, “Ta-da!”

The children jumped to their feet cheering and clapping for the scary twins in green and purple spandex. The twins took several bows to all the cheers and applause.

Ginny had stopped clenching her heart and Harry and Remus had managed to stop laughing. Hermione looked like she completely disapproved of that stunt. Tonks on the other hand was apparently finally settling down, and seemed to be taking deep calming breaths. She relaxed and turned to the cute puppy she had completely forgotten about in all the commotion. Sadly, since she had completely forgotten about the little guy, she was completely unprepared for the dog to happily bark the word “Hello!” to her.

And when she started in on the paint-peeling screams of terror again, the kids all started laughing and screaming more. And of course, the puppy was loudly saying repeatedly “Hello!”

Finally, Tonks blood pressure reached critical mass and she passed out before she did herself any serious medical damage. And much like the adults, the children all laughed at her.

Draco made his way over to the giggling group, dragging a large sack that was moving and shifting quite a bit. "Finally. It took all of the house elves, but here's your no good bloody nifflers, you useless wankers."

Gred and Forge smiled at each other brilliantly.

"This better be a pretty amazing trick," Draco growled out.

"Oh it is!" Forge happily replied, taking the sack of nifflers from Draco.

Gred added. "Even Harry knows this trick."

Harry smiled. "I do?"

Forge nodded. "Number thirty-seven on our list of-"

"Better things to do than go to Potions class." Gred finished.

Harry burst out laughing.

Draco sighed defeatedly. "What's number thirty-seven?"

Gred and Forge smiled at each other and said in unison, "Release destructive creatures in Malfoy Manor. Goodbye kids!" And with another explosion of bright orange smoke Gred and Forge disappeared from the grounds of Malfoy Manor.

## CHAPTER SIX

Remus was still snickering even after dinner, the dessert, the gifts for the kids and taking them back to St. Mungo's. "Don't you think maybe you went a little too far on Draco?"

Harry was smiling. "You know you lose some of your scolding tone, when you're snickering in between words."

Remus snapped himself to an angry calm façade. It lasted until he pictured the way Tonks' eyes rolled backwards into her head, while she was still screaming. He was fully laughing by now.

"Do you think the twins went too far?" Harry asked.

Remus shrugged. "I'd say it probably depends on if Draco lost anything irreplaceable."

Harry shook his head. "As soon as Draco knew I was involved I'm sure he doubled the amount of insurance he carries, and moved the important things away from the immediate area. And besides, there will be a glowing human interest piece in the Prophet tomorrow detailing the party for sick children Draco threw." Harry frowned a bit. "Though considering the destruction, I think I may even have to give him a compliment in the article."

Remus laughed. "In that case, no. Draco earned this from you and the Weasleys."

Harry smiled and nodded. "I think I might need to do something to the twins though. They're responsible for me having to publicly compliment the ponce." Harry was thinking deeply and got a wide smile.

Remus grinned at that look. "What are you going to do?"

"Hmm. Maybe nothing." Harry shrugged. "Or maybe I should give George a kitten."

Remus' eyes widened. "You gave them Padfoot!"

Harry's eyes only twinkled.

Remus looked disgusted. "You put a fetal puppy in Fred! That's so... so..."

"Marauder-ish?" Harry suggested.

"I was thinking ethically and morally reprehensible. As well as a complete violation of all natural rules of existence and creation."

"Oh whatever, Mom." Harry said with a pouty face.

Remus just sputtered, completely incensed.

"Tell me, Moony," Harry explained. "Just who exactly is hurt or upset about Fred giving birth to Padfoot?"

Remus stopped, slightly shocked Harry was defending his actions.

"And do you honestly think Fred, George, and Padfoot aren't all giddy for each other?"

Remus was silenced, because what Harry had said was entirely true. "But... but..." Remus argued. "You're not supposed to play God!"

"Pshaw!" Harry shook his hand at Remus. "Maybe you're not supposed to." Harry stuck out his tongue at Moony. "And besides, you're jumping to conclusions about 'playing God.' It could just be an extensive complicated bit of magic and prank on the twins, and Padfoot might not even be real."

Remus took a step back and gasped. "Is that what it is?"

"No." Harry shook his head. "He's a real puppy."

Remus sighed.

"But the choice to do it was Padfoot's." Harry calmly explained.

Remus stood up to leave. "I don't want to know. This is situation has perverted science and magic both in ways I had never thought possible."

"But I can explain, Moony!" Harry said loudly.

Moony sighed. "Please explain to me how a fetus chose to magically be inserted into Fred Weasley."

"Well, okay maybe I made a couple assumptions for him, but he had always really liked jokes and pranks, and I knew he'd love the twins. Well, first I mean, he wasn't a fetus when I knew him. I don't know what happened, or why, but something happened to him when he was with Tonks." Harry shook his head, lost in remembrance. "I'm not sure I want to know. But he came back to me, and made it clear, he had changed. And he didn't like what he had become. He wanted to forget. He wanted to forget everything." Harry was tearing up a bit. "That poor little doggie. Such a good doggie. And well, I knew obliviation was an all or nothing deal with muggle animals, so I did what I had to do." Harry was sniffing at this point. "I obliviated him. And then, for his own sake and safety, I had decided to de-age him back to a puppy so that he would be able to cope with the absence of memories." Harry laughed a sad and tired laugh. "And, as I'm sure you've realized, the de-aging got out of control. He went back past when he was supposed to, and kept growing smaller and smaller. When I realized I'd sent him back to his own conception, I panicked. I didn't know what to do. So I froze him in a stasis, and considered the options. After hours of calculations, the best option available was to stick him in Fred Weasley's womb." Harry finished with a smile of relief. "Oh and give Fred a womb too." Harry was staring off into space. "You know, explaining this aloud, I'm beginning to wonder if I forget to carry a number."

Remus was just watching Harry in shock. Finally at the end he couldn't take it and was giggling. "That was horrid acting, Harry." Remus was chuckling. "And the worst part is that I believe you."

Harry smiled and finished wiping his tears. "So, George's kitten. Your vote is 'yes'? Or 'maybe'?"

“No!” Remus yelled. He pointed his finger angrily. “No playing God! Bad! Bad Harry! The puppy was a perverse necessity. A kitten would be just plain wrong!”

Harry frowned and whined, “But playing God is fun.”

“No, Harry, no.” Remus continued scolding.

“Oh fine.” Harry grumbled. “Let’s go see if Tonks and Ginny understand it yet.”

Harry and Remus walked out of Harry’s DADA office and into the DADA classroom. They found Hermione up by the chalkboard, banging her head on the desk, while Ginny and Tonks sat at a couple of student’s desks.

“Let me get this straight. When Gred in green came back from behind the tree, it was actually Gred’s body with Forge’s head on it? And Forge’s body had Gred’s head on it?” Tonks asked again.

Hermione lifted her head, sighed, and nodded again.

“Okay, so Forge’s body, which was controlled by the head on Gred’s body, stuck a finger up the nose of the head on its body? That’s why the head on Gred’s body said it was 'grody' because that was the head that felt what the other body felt. And then Forge’s body picked a winner and wiped it in the hair of the head on its body, which was actually Gred’s head?”

“Wait a second,” Ginny interrupted. “Now I’m confused.”

Hermione huffed tiredly. “Yes.” Hermione explained. “And that’s why in response, the head on Forge’s body, that had... mucous issues, said ‘Alright. That’s it’ just before Gred’s body ran over to Forge’s body, and kicked Forge’s body hard in the shin, but it was the head on Gred’s body that yelped out in pain even though the body in pain was Forge’s.”



Tonks thought she might understand, but there was a possibility she was wrong. She grumbled out, "Wish I had a twin I could trade heads with."

Harry was really tempted to just start casting mild confundus charms on all of them and see how long they would attempt to understand the madness the twins provided earlier. Harry decided he should point out a fact that had escaped Tonks. "Tonks, you're a metamorphmagus."

Tonks made her confused face again. "Yeah," she answered. "So?"

Ginny snickered and shook her head.

Harry smiled and responded. "You're everyone's twin."

"Oh," Tonks considered. "Right."

Remus snickered. "Anyways, folks. I'm going to head home. Harry, thank you for inviting me. I don't think I've had this much fun in a long time. And I know all those kids had the time of their lives. So, perversions of nature, and horrifying, mentally scarring children's entertainment aside, I'd say this was a success."

"Yeah," Harry grinned. "They did all seem to enjoy the day. Even the hippogriffs were glowing. I'll talk to you later, Moony." The girls added their goodbyes to Remus, and made no sign they were leaving the classroom.

As soon as Remus had left the classroom, Hermione frowned at Harry. "Speaking of perversions of nature, Nine-year olds should not be animagi!"

Harry's eyes went wide. "I don't suppose you'll believe me when I tell you I have no idea what you're talking about?"

Hermione, Ginny, and Tonks said "No", "Nope", and "Uh-uh" in order.

"Even if I pinky swear?" Harry asked.

Tonks' eyes widened. "Don't you desecrate the good name of the pinky swear!"

Harry grumbled, "Fine. I may have taught him a little trick."

"A little trick?" Hermione yelled. "It is an extremely dangerous and complicated bit of magic that only adults can even begin to attempt! And he's not supposed to use magic! It could kill him, Harry!"

Harry sighed. "Actually, I think it's going to save his life."

Hermione stopped, and Ginny and Tonks both looked curiously at Harry.

"He cannot use his own magic, without risking his condition worsening. He needs to build up his magical muscles, but that's pretty hard to do, when he shouldn't use his magic. So I figured I could give him a piece of my magic and get him using that, to build up his own magical muscles without risking using his own magic."

Hermione's face relaxed as she said, "Oh."

Harry turned to her and continued. "As I'm sure Hermione is tempted to say, is that it's impossible to give someone else a piece of magic. Well, I know a sort of way. But for it to work, it has to be geared towards a very specific purpose, and to integrate into Simon, it also had to involve something very personal and be a specific act of magic. The more complicated and complex the magic, the quicker his magical muscles improve. After seeing the way he handled Professor McGonagall, I decided the animagus transformation would be perfect." Harry shrugged. "Simon adores cats, but even I was surprised he turned into one."

Tonks and Ginny were nodding their heads in understanding. Hermione looked a bit embarrassed.

"Although, he promised me, he wouldn't let anyone see him transform. So how did you three figure this out?" Harry asked with an edge to his voice.

Tonks smiled. "Yes, Simon was intent on keeping his promise to you. When he told us what he wanted to show us, he demanded we turn around and face the other direction until he was done."

Harry groaned and shook his head with a smile. "Perhaps I should have been a bit clearer in my instructions to him."

Ginny stood up and smiled. "I'm sorry I was doubting your actions and intentions, Harry. It's getting late and I need to head home. But before I go, Harry?" She smiled a shy smile at him. "Would you like to go out with me sometime?"

"What!" Tonks screamed.

"What!" Hermione yelled.

"Huh?" Harry asked.

Ginny's smile gained a bit of confidence. "I asked if you would like to go out with me. Just the two of us. On a date."

"But... bwah..." Harry noticed the stares Hermione and Tonks were giving him. "You can't do that! I mean....can you?"

Ginny smiled calmly. "I'm not demanding exclusive rights or anything. Just asking you if you would like to go on a date with me."

Tonks and Hermione were both growling slightly.

"Err... umm..." Harry was beginning to think the castle may have been intentionally raising the temperature in the DADA classroom. "You sure, Gin? I mean it would kind of change things between us."

"Harry," Ginny smiled and sighed. "You slept with all of us last Halloween. A date isn't that big of a step."

Harry saw no way out of this one and quietly said. "How's Friday night?"

“Wonderful. I’ll pick you up here at seven. Good night Hermione. G’night Tonks.” Ginny’s eyes narrowed demurely and she purred out, “Good night, Harry.”

“Wait!” Tonks yelled. “Harry, would you like to go out with me?” Tonks asked trying to remain calm despite the competitive angry undertone to her words.

Harry eeped and took a step back. “Saturday okay for you?”

Tonks nodded. “Perfect. I’m looking forward to it.”

Harry meekly nodded and dropped his head.

The sweet, kind voice of Hermione broke the silence. “Harry,” she began with a warm smile. “Would you like to go out on a date with me?”

Harry winced at the looks Tonks and Ginny had. They were incredibly fake smiles, accompanied by quiet guttural growls.

Harry smiled weakly, though his twinkling eyes betrayed him. “I’m sorry, Hermione. I don’t think I should.”

Hermione went white as a sheet. She was unmoving and silent staring at Harry.

“No!” Harry yelled. “It’s not what you think.”

Hermione felt a bit shattered at the moment, and didn’t even know what to think.

“It’s just,” Harry began. “It’s just, I shouldn’t be saying this in front of them but I’m pretty sure Nicholas has the hots for you. He’s dated so rarely since Perennelle passed that I wouldn’t want to hurt his feelings.”

Hermione’s eyes widened and she couldn’t stop the smile that spread across her face. After thinking she had been rejected, she was so

relieved that she forgot how angry she should be at Harry for putting her through that.

Harry saw the bright smile on Hermione's face and quickly took advantage of the moment. "And I can see from the goofy grin you're now sporting that you like him too. So why don't you ask him out, and see where that takes you. If it doesn't work out, maybe you and I will try then."

Tonks and Ginny both frowned at that last statement. But Hermione now realized just what Harry was doing and jumped up to say, "urghn-bluh!"

"Are you okay, Hermione?" Harry gently asked.

Hermione growled and said "Nnnnhh... fine."

"Oh good," Harry smiled. "I don't know what I'd do without you guys."

Ginny smiled. "Night Harry. See you Friday," said Ginny as she left the classroom.

Tonks grinned brightly. "Good night, Harry. I'll be here Saturday, if I don't see you sooner."

And just like that, Harry and Hermione were alone.

Harry cast a particularly strong privacy charm on the room and smiled. "You okay still, Hermione?"

"You evil bloody wanker!" Hermione yelled. "I thought you were rejecting me! That was so mean."

Harry smiled and rolled his eyes. "Oh come on, Hermione. You know I like you just as much as I like Ginny and Tonks. You know me better than anyone. It was all you ridiculous girls that forced me into this position."

"Hmmpf," she smartly replied.

"I just hope none of you expect me to grow up."

"Don't worry Harry." Hermione said with a condescending smile. "There are some miracles that you pray for, and then others you couldn't even get selling your soul."

Harry frowned. "I think I should be insulted, but I'm not." Harry ended with a shrug.

Hermione looked at Harry quizzically. "So why on earth do you want to date me as Nicholas Flamel and not Harry Potter?"

"Well because you're the only person in the world I can actually do that with." Harry responded obviously.

"Albus may be heartbroken but I figured that much." Hermione replied. "But why? You're already going to be getting the international playboy image dating at least Ginny and Tonks on consecutive nights, and who knows what else you may attract these days. This makes it harder on me keeping secrets from two of my best friends, who don't realize that I too am dating their boyfriend. Ahh crud." Hermione sighed before finishing, "Why is it that you want to hide the fact that you're dating me from everybody else?"

Harry shrugged and smiled. "I thought that was obvious."

Hermione huffed apparently disagreeing with that statement.

Harry explained with a broad smile. "So we can double date."

## CHAPTER SEVEN

“You’re going out with Ginny on Friday and Tonks on Saturday?” Ron asked.

Harry nodded with a weak smile.

“Harry!” Ron exclaimed with a smile. “You’re a scarlet man!”

Harry shrugged, half agreeing with him.

“Just keep your elixir to yourself, and the Weasleys won’t hunt you down for defiling our sweet innocent Ginny.”

“Sweet? Innocent?” Harry asked incredulously. “Have you talked to her in say, the last decade? I’d imagine you’re a lot more sweet and innocent than she is.”

“What!” Ron yelled. Ron stared at Harry judging the truthfulness of his claims. Ron came to a decision. “Alright, that’s it: unicorn test time. We need a unicorn.” Ron said frantically looking around the DADA office for a unicorn. “Harry, you got a unicorn?”

Harry thought about the question, and made a show of checking his pockets. “Nope. Not at the moment. Although...” Harry paused intentionally. “I can turn into a unicorn.”

Ron looked at Harry for a long second and nodded. “That’ll have to do.”

Harry was inwardly laughing his head off. But on the outside he was only showing honest support for his frantic friend.

“Do you know where Ginny is?” Ron asked.

Harry closed his eyes and opened his senses. He smiled and said, “She’s in Hermione’s office.”

Ron looked at Harry oddly. "I meant did she tell you where she'd be. I didn't want you to send out your itchy magical feely ticklers." Ron said with a shiver. "You know that's just not natural."

"Ron," Harry explained, "if you can feel my magic when I do that, then it's just a sign that you are touching yourself too much."

Ron looked away quickly. "I didn't feel nuttin."

"Well you might want to work on that then Ron." Harry said. "You're looking a bit peaked there."

"Oh be quiet," Ron shushed. "Now let's go insure that Ginny's integrity is intact."

"And the way to know that is if a unicorn will let her touch her? That's the test?" Harry clarified.

Ron nodded and led the way to the History of Magic classroom.

Ron knocked and started talking loudly. "Ginny! We need to talk."

Hermione and Ginny scrambled to hide whatever they were working on as Ron and Harry walked in.

"Harry seems to think that I'm more sweet and innocent than you are." Ron began.

"And you're telling me this to try and make me jealous?" Ginny interrupted.

Ron turned red again and just sputtered. "I'm not... I mean Harry's pretty and all but I'd never... oh Merlin." Ron groaned and eventually collected himself ignoring the sniggers made by everyone else in the room. "Why am I stuttering? You're the one lusting for the flesh sword of Gryffindor!"

Hermione actually went pink at that particular euphemism. "Why are you interrupting us, Ron?"



“Oh right. There are some doubts about Ginny’s virtue and I know it’s been years since her last Unicorn test.”

Hermione looked at Ginny and snickered quietly. Growing up with six older brothers had some pluses, but it also had some minuses.

“Ron. You and the rest of our idiotic brothers have tried this a half dozen times. And you’ve yet to ever even locate a unicorn.”

“Yes well it’s time we finally got some answers because I’ve got a unicorn this time.” Ron said with a smile. “Harry?”

Harry turned to Ginny and smiled. With a soft pop, he was replaced with a regal looking glowing white unicorn.

Ginny quickly swallowed the snort she almost let out. Ron was a bit dense sometimes. “Alright Ron,” she said with an exaggerated roll of her eyes. “Let’s see if this unicorn will let me approach it.”

Ron watched intently as Ginny slowly walked over and began petting Harry the unicorn. The unicorn was enjoying the ministrations and clearly not recoiling in horror. “Hmm. So unless you’ve managed to bewitch a unicorn, you have in fact passed the test.” Ron smiled and nodded. “Our brothers will be pleased.”

Ginny shook her head, while the unicorn seemed to be getting a bit frisky. At first he was just spanking Ginny soundly with whips of his tail. But now he was getting to know her, the unicorn way.

Ginny blushed closing her eyes and said loudly, “Harry, that better be the horn I feel.”

Ron noticed Hermione frowning and asked her, “You could pass the unicorn test too, couldn’t you, Hermy?”

Hermione’s frown found a new target. “I don’t think that’s any of your business, Ronald.”

“Sorry. You’re right. And besides, who are we kidding? Of course you can pass the test.”

"I'll have you know, I'm old enough to make my own decisions and they are none of your concern!"

"Geez, settle down Herms." Ron placated. "I just meant you never met a test you couldn't pass. But, seriously, defensive much?"

By this point the soft moans of pleasure Ginny was making could no longer be ignored. Ron looked over at his sister and the unicorn, and yelled out, "Oi! Potter! Get your nose out of my sister's arse!"

The unicorn curled its lips up in a toothy horse faced grin and shook its head vigorously slinging slobber to its left and right.

With another soft pop, the unicorn was replaced again with Harry Potter. "Satisfied now, Ron?"

Ron smiled. "Yeah, we're good. Let's go back to your office and get completely drunk." Ron suggested as he left Hermione's office.

Harry smirked and turned to Ginny. "Satisfied, Gin?"

Ginny growled in frustration. "Not by a long shot."

Harry huffed. "You girls are so needy." Harry shook his head. "See you Friday." And he too left the office.

Listening for the sounds of the men leaving, they heard Harry in the distance, his voice slowly drifting off, saying, "As soon as we're drunk let's grab a late breakfast. I haven't eaten yet and I want an omelette with peanut butter and..." Assuming they were in the clear now, Ginny and Hermione took back out the parchments and notebooks they'd been using.

Hermione looked at Ginny and said, "Alright. So nnggh..." Hermione's usual grit face of frustration was showing now.

"Hermione... are you sure this is something I should know?" Ginny asked. "I mean I know you fancy Nicholas, but I just can't imagine it. For me, I mean there's Harry and then there's everyone else. I would

compare any prospective piece of man meat to Harry, and none of them would measure up. To me, it'd be like comparing Elixir of Life to... okay bad comparison."

Hermione made a sickly face at the mental image of lab workers analyzing substances. She was pointing and gesturing wildly to the texts in front of her.

Ginny sighed. "Alright. That's Nicholas. Nicholas Flamel. We've got this far several times now."

Hermione nodded and added, "Blih...erhha..."

"Bluy erhah?" Ginny repeated. "Give up on the speaking, Hermione. Stick with the visuals."

Hermione rolled her eyes and slowly pointed at a picture.

"It's a bear." Ginny stated. "Is Nicholas' animagus form a bear?"

Hermione shook her head.

"It's brown. It's furry." Ginny guessed.

Hermione made an apprehensive face.

"It's furry?" Ginny asked. "Okay not quite furry. It's fuzzy? It sheds? It's wet? It's hibernating?"

Hermione whimpered quietly. She waited to see if Ginny was going to say anything more. Hermione said "drubbah" before quickly giving up. She pointed to another picture.

"Kingsley?" Ginny asked. "Kingsley's head? He's bald?"

Hermione smiled.

"He's bald."

Hermione shook her head.

“He’s not bald.”

Hermione pointed viciously to one of the earlier pictures.

“The bear is bald?” Ginny received no answer other than Hermione began to slowly bang her head on the desk. “No. Not bald. The bear is hairy?”

Hermione’s head whipped up so fast you’d swear she broke the sound barrier. Or at least something cracked from the sudden movement.

“Hairy.” Ginny said with a smile.

Hermione’s head bobbed up and down in a fair impression of Dobby.

“The bear is hairy.”

Hermione stopped her vigorous bobbing and gave one small shake of the head. She pointed at the first picture.

“Not the bear. Nicholas Flamel.” Ginny figured. “Nicholas Flamel is hairy.”

Hermione jumped from her seat. She put one index finger on her nose, and began to viciously stab in the air towards Ginny with the other. She was beaming a bright smile.

Ginny made a pained face. “Nicholas Flamel is hairy?” She barely processed this though and yelled out, “Eww! No Hermione! I don’t want to know these things. I told you I don’t dig on the great great grandfolks. And if what floats your boat is running your fingers through the thick bushy pelt on a man’s belly and back, please keep it to yourself. Eww.” Ginny finished with a disgusted shudder.

Hermione whimpers had by now transformed into sobs.

Friday at precisely 6:58 PM, Harry quickly stuck his head outside his classroom door, and found Ginny waiting there staring at her watch.

“You know it’s okay to be early, Gin.” Harry offered.

Ginny jumped up startled and looked like she had been caught out after curfew.

Harry smiled. “It’s good to see you. You look beautiful.”

Ginny smiled shyly. “Thank you Harry.” She said and kissed him on the cheek.

“Goodness!” Harry grinned. “You smell nice too. So what’s the plan for this evening?”

Ginny replied, “Well, considering you’ve been hiding around and going who knows where in the muggle world, I thought it’d be nice to take you somewhere in the wizarding world. You know, with the actual appearance of Harry Potter.”

Harry raised an eyebrow.

“Potter! I said Potter.” Ginny stammered. “Anyways, I figured you might like to eat at The Menagerie. Given their predisposition towards other creatures and part-humans, I thought you might like it there and I... well...”

“Ginny, settle down.” Harry said. “You don’t have to justify yourself to me. You asked me out, that means you get to do the planning. This isn’t a test.” He said with a shake of his head. He took her hand and they walked out onto the grounds.

“Sure feels like one.” Ginny mumbled.

They talked calmly and pleasantly, though Ginny kept turning away when Harry would catch her watching him. Harry was enjoying seeing her so nervous. They arrived at the restaurant and Ginny informed the hostess, “Reservation for two. The name is Ginny Weasley.”

The hostess was looking down at her seating chart. “Yes, of course, right this-” And she stopped suddenly only just now noticing who was standing in front of her.

“Oh. Oh my.” The flustered hostess repeated. “Umm, err, I’m sure I can find you a much better seat, if you’ll just give me a moment.”

Harry looked at the hostess, and stated firmly, “You will seat us where you intended to seat Miss Weasley and her guest.”

The hostess’s eyes seemed to glaze over a bit, and she replied, “I will seat you where I intended to seat Miss Weasley and her guest,” before quickly turning and leading them towards a booth in the back.

Ginny smiled at Harry. She was thinking how nice having a boyfriend who always gets his way would be.

The pair had been enjoying relative anonymity, as it appeared either no one recognized Harry, or they were all respecting his desire for privacy. As a result, the conversation over dinner was becoming a bit strained, as Ginny still seemed to think she was on trial. Or worse, part of some beauty pageant.

Harry saw Ginny was struggling, and decided this would be a good time to ask, “So what were you and Hermione working on when Ron and I barged in the other day?”

Ginny’s eyes lit up. “Oh Merlin! It was hilarious. Hermione kept trying to tell me something but wasn’t able to come out and say it so she was trying to get the message across with visual clues.”

Harry smiled. “It is fun to see a brilliant witch like Hermione struggle to form words and just look constipated while saying something along the lines of ‘urrhabbble’.”

Ginny cracked up seeing the clenching Harry’s face was making.

Harry subtly asked, “So did you figure out what Hermione was trying to tell you?”

Ginny looked a bit disgusted and nodded. “Yeah. I did. Apparently, Hermione seemed to think was important to tell me that Nicholas Flamel...” she trailed off.

Harry's eyebrow arched inquisitively. "Nicholas Flamel," he began for her.

Ginny shrugged. "Nicholas Flamel... is hairy."

Harry's couldn't stop himself from snickering. His chuckles turned into a laugh.

Ginny rolled her eyes. "I thought it was more along the lines of too much information, than funny. Although it is hard to repeat without laughing." She finished with a giggle.

Harry nodded. "And it's true. I know Nicky has to shave his inner thighs to keep his legs from getting matted and knotted together."

Ginny paled. "Oh merciful heavens."

Harry continued. "Yeah. He had a house elf that completely broke down into tears. And so now he no longer asks the house elves to help him wax his- Crackhead!" Harry finished turning to face to the goblin approaching their table.

Crackhead bowed imperiously. "It is good to see you, Mr. Potter."

"You too, Crackhead." Harry said returning the bow, affirming their status as equals. "Crackhead, I would like you to meet Ginny Weasley. Ginny, this is Crackhead, one of the most senior officials at Gringotts."

"Pleased to meet you, Crackhead."

"And you as well, Miss Weasley," the goblin replied. He turned to Harry, "So have you finally found your mate and are settling down now?"

Ginny blushed furiously at the goblin's forwardness and her own desire to mate.

Harry shook his head. "No, and don't you start spreading more rumors." Harry scolded Crackhead.

Crackhead had a wide smile that looked anything but innocent.

"I guess you could say I've begun the interview process, but hiring is still many years away." Harry explained in terms that would mock the wicked goblin.

"Of course, Mr. Potter," Crackhead replied, well aware that Harry prefers to be called Harry rather than anything formal. "I noticed you over here and I just wanted to greet you on this fine evening, as well as inform you that there is going to be opening at the high council's poker game very soon."

Harry chuckled. "Let me guess, Riptorn's mate is putting her foot down?"

Crackhead smiled toothily. "Yes. Apparently she will abide a losing streak, but believes losing every single time he's played is not luck, but an indication that he is horrible at gambling. She's giving him one more chance."

Harry smiled and nodded. "It has been over a decade."

Crackhead chuckled. "Even at work, he's been having hearing problems. He seems to think all the goblins are calling him 'Whippedtorn'."

Harry smiled. "Well, I would most definitely enjoy a seat at that table if it were possible." Harry's eyes twinkled mischievously. "I think I would bring a lot of good things to the game."

Crackhead smirked. "I'm sure you would. I'm more concerned you'll take too many of those good things home with you though." He turned to Ginny. "My apologies for interrupting the interview, Miss Weasley. Good luck on getting the... position."

Ginny blushed furiously again and managed a weak nod.



“Good evening, Mr. Potter. Perhaps I’ll see you next poker night.” Crackhead finished with a bow and left Ginny and Harry to their dinner.

Harry smiled at Ginny. “That would be a challenging game to get into. But enough about me. Where were we?”

Ginny thought about it and answered, “You were saying the elves used to wax... actually, how about we change the subject? Something a bit more palatable while there’s still food in front of us please.”

“Hmm,” Harry said. “That certainly narrows the field of things I’m a capable conversationalist on.”

“Oh for heaven’s sake, Harry.” Ginny admonished. “Why don’t you just tell me a story of something you did when you disappeared?”

Harry smiled and thought about what she might like to hear about. Harry wiped his mouth, having finished his meal and began. “Hmm. I’m not sure I have any particular stories really.”

Ginny looked at Harry incredulously.

Harry laughed at the look Ginny was giving him. “How bout this? I’ll walk you through one of my typical days. That sound good?”

Ginny nodded. “I have a feeling you and I define ‘typical’ differently, so let’s hear it.”

Harry paused and was trying to think of a good day. After a few seconds of silence, he began. “Alright. A little ways back, a couple of weeks before I played with the statue in the atrium in the Ministry of Magic, there was one day where I was in the mood for some ice cream. It was a little after noon, mid-July, and really hot out. Thankfully, my usual luck came through and minutes later I see the ice cream man driving down the street. There’s a pack of kids chasing after him but he’s not stopping for them. I’m not sure what his problem was, but he wasn’t playing with the kids. He was just being mean.”

Ginny nodded indicating she was listening.

“So I did what anyone would do.” Harry explained. “I stunned the ice cream man, and tossed him in an empty freezer for a few hours. I stopped the vehicle and spent the next four hours driving around giving out every last bit of ice cream to kids for free. I woke the guy, obliviated him a little, made sure he wasn’t hurt from his chilly nap, and left him unsure of his day but short a whole bunch of ice cream. And naturally I saved myself a super mega choco chunka hunka fudge swirl delight, and was about to eat that, when I saw a telly in a window display that caught my eye. It was reporting on the ‘Running of the Bulls’ that had happened earlier that morning. I’m not sure what it was that caught my eye, nor do I remember what the newscaster said, and it’s probably just as well, because man oh man, did that look like fun. Wild beasts with horns chasing after a mass of people running for their lives. Muggles sure know how to have a good time.”

“I’ve heard of that!” Ginny exclaimed. “It’s in Spain. Pamperluna or something.”

Harry nodded. “Yeah, afterwards I found it’s something they do every morning for like a week, once a year.”

“Charlie and Bill did that the year after Charlie graduated. Mum thought they were crazy but Dad just wanted to know about the muggles. Bill said it was a lot of fun.”

“It was! It was sooooo much fun! I mean I lost count,” Harry explained. “But I must have gored at least a dozen muggles!”

Ginny’s giggling quickly ceded and she looked at Harry incredulously.

Harry was too excited by the memory and just kept on talking. “I mean as soon as I heard the newscast, I froze my ice cream in a pocket of reality, ran into an alley, and apparated there. First person I ran into was myself. I told me, it only happens in the mornings, and apparently I was just killing time waiting for me to show up. So, as usual, I dug out my time turner and went back to that morning so I could run with the bulls. When I saw the crowds of people, many of

whom were being mean to the animals and were acting like idiots, I decided I didn't want to run with them. So I discreetly shifted my form into a bull, and got in place with the rest of the bulls."

The shock on Ginny's face hadn't gone away, but at least now it was a welcoming and familiar look of shock.

"Soon as we got going, I used my bull senses and went after the muggles who smelled strongest of alcohol and poked most of them soundly on their bums. There was even a little kid, who should not have been out there. He looked like a native and was probably about seven years old. I ran up to him, scared him half to death with my horns and flipped him in the air onto my back. Pretty soon he had calmed down and was directing me towards muggles to attack." Harry had a faraway smile. "We made a good team."

"Shortly thereafter, Felipe, as I learned his name was, made his way off to find his blind younger brother or something, and I changed back. The first thing I felt was a strong desire to wash my hair. Had a delicious lunch there in Spain, and waited for me to show up. When I showed up, I informed myself that the run only happened in the mornings, and that I had been killing time waiting on me to show up. As soon as I disappeared into the past, I apparated right back to the alley next to the telly I'd been watching. I got my ice cream out of the pocket reality, and thought that getting drunk sounded fun."

Ginny was just sort of nodding dumbly listening to Harry's idea of a 'typical' day, and was mildly impressed at the number of laws Harry broke on a 'typical' day.

"I remembered a bar I walked past once when I was younger. Aunt Petunia had driven me and Dudley to the mall there once. She'd send me into the store to buy something and be gone when I came back out. What I remembered most was that it was called 'Finnigan's', and considering I lived with Seamus for seven years I was curious. I was eating my ice cream, and walked into this dive. I asked if the owners were related to Seamus. Turns out there were eight people there who knew a Seamus Finnigan. Of course there were five different Seamus's they all knew and none of them were the one we know. Anyways, so I'm just minding my own business eating my super

mega choco chunka hunka fudge swirl delight ice cream, when this massive drunken idiot asks me for a lick of my ice cream.”

Ginny was getting a little worried.

“I tell him no, and he doesn’t like that. He keeps asking and I keep saying no. Finally I take the rest of my ice cream and eat all the rest of it as fast as I can. This angers the tubby bugger. And I got one of the worst freeze headaches you can imagine. I started staggering and was clutching my head. Apparently, the chunky drunk thinks I was making fun of him and takes a swing at me. I look around and see his friends cheering him on, and apparently these people were looking forward to seeing a fight.” Harry shrugged. “I thought it sounded fun, so I let him connect a punch to my stomach. Unfortunately, he was stronger than I gave him credit for, and it knocked the wind out of me. I responded by punching him back. At this point, all his friends attack me too and start swinging punches and kicks. Somewhere along the line, it becomes less fun than you would think, and I might have gotten a little angry. Long story short, I had to stun the whole bar, obliviate them all, and heal three broken wrists, a lot of ribs and fourteen collarbones I may have gotten overzealous with.” Harry finished. After a few seconds he added. “I never did get drunk that night.” Harry sighed loudly. “Come to think of it, I probably seriously injure more muggles when I’m sober.”

Ginny was sitting there a bit stunned at an average day in the life of Harry Potter. “So whatever happened to the tubby bugger who started the fight?”

“That day I just left him at the bar like everyone else.” Harry smiled wickedly. “But a few weeks later, I caught up with him again. I removed the memory charm on him so he remembered getting his arse handed to him, and morphed into my actual form. When he realized who I was he actually apologized. That shocked me. We ended up going back to the bar, getting along really well, and getting completely plastered that night. Of course once he had passed out, I stripped him naked and called animal control.”

“Harry!” Ginny scolded. “You can’t leave muggles with knowledge of us.”

Harry rolled his eyes. "Somehow I think my cousin Dudley already knew about magic." Harry finished his story and concluded his argument by sticking out his tongue and blowing a raspberry at Ginny.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

“Well I don’t know what crack Herms has been smoking Nicholas, but I think your tie looks lovely.” Tonks said with a pleased smile. Tonks apparently had a fine appreciation for a well matched tie, and the neon green and yellow liquid bubbles that slowly moved around Nicholas’s tie provided a striking contrast to his deep purple velvet suit. Apparently Nicholas’s date, Hermione, disagreed based on the huffing she responded with. Or perhaps she’s just another only child who grew up bitter that her parents loved their lava lamp more than her.

“Thank you, Tonks, I happen to agree.” Nicholas replied. “And may I say that halter-top fits you quite snugly.”

“Watch your staring, old man!” Harry said loudly. “You can only blame so much on a lazy eye.”

Tonks admonished her date. “Oh Harry. Can’t you and Nicholas get along for one evening?”

“We’ll behave Tonks,” Nicholas replied. “It’s all just playful bickering.”

Harry made a face and mimicked in a high-pitched voice, “It’s all just playful bickering.”

Hermione just looked at Harry sadly.

“Besides,” Nicholas said loudly interrupting Harry’s antics. “Tonight we are here to support our colleague.”

Tonks nodded. “Doesn’t it seem odd though that they would reschedule Severus’ award ceremony for an earlier time, that just so happened to be all of our first official dates?”

Nicholas and Harry nodded with similar expressions. Nicholas began, “That is-”

Harry interrupted, “-a peculiar-”

“-coincidence,” finished Nicholas.

Hermione added a snort and a not so quiet “Hah!”

“Something to add, Hermy?” Harry asked.

Hermione shook her head. “Nope. Just feeling a little fearful for Severus’ sake.”

Nicholas raised an eyebrow. He waited until Hermione was drinking and asked, “Should I be getting jealous?”

Hermione manage to spew a large mouthful of water forward directly onto an unprepared Tonks. Harry had already been handing his napkin to Tonks so that she could dry herself off. Hermione began apologizing profusely, and staring oddly at Harry. She collected herself enough to smack Nicholas on the back of his head.

Tonks wryly smiled and said, “Something tells me Severus should remain safe from Hermione’s advances.”

Hermione went red again and tried to frown at Tonks. Tonks got up and said, “If you’ll excuse me, I’m just going to go to the ladies room and freshen up.”

As soon as she left the table, Hermione threw up a privacy charm and said, “Alright. Harry,” she growled at Harry. “And Harry,” she growled at Nicholas. “I will not be the butt of your nonstop joke on the world. I have a breaking point and you two...err one... are dangerously close to it.”

Harry put on the smile that melts Hermione’s heart. “Aww come on Hermy. You’re looking at this all wrong.”

Nicholas continued, “You’re not the butt of the joke at all.”

Harry nodded, “You’re one of the very few we trust enough to be in on it.”

Nicholas nodded and hugged her closer.

Hermione gave in at the boyish glee on both their faces. "Wait," she started. "So which one of you two is from now, and which is from later?"

Harry and Nicholas looked in each other's eyes. Nicholas responded. "Sorry, we can't tell you that."

"Why not?" Hermione asked with a frown.

Harry and Nicholas again seemed to have a quick silent conversation. "I thought that would be obvious." Harry said.

Hermione began getting that dangerous anger in her eyes again.

Harry smiled and said, "Because the one who's done this already knows that we didn't tell you."

Hermione's eyes flashed and smacked Nicholas upside the head again.

"Oww!" Nicholas growled at Harry. "This is your fault!"

Harry smiled triumphantly. "No it's not. It's yours."

This stopped Nicholas from replying and he paused and thought about it. "I suppose in some ways it is."

Hermione sighed. "You people are sick."

Harry and Nicholas nodded and shrugged in unison.

"Why'd you ask?" Nicholas inquired.

"It's just I saw Harry ready to hand his napkin to Tonks before I'd even sprayed her yet." Hermione explained. "Speaking of which, why didn't you just shield her from the spray?"



Harry looked at Hermione incredulously. "This one is even more obvious than the timeline excuse."

"Yeah," Nicholas explained. "Hello! McFly! Tonks is wearing a halter-top."

"And I've boosted the cooling charm around our table." Harry added.

"And if anyone is to blame for the wet shirt," Nicholas said.

"It's you." Harry and Nicholas both said with a smile at Hermione.

"Alright! That's it!" Hermione yelled inside their privacy charm. "You two are going to behave. You're not going to torment me. You're not going to trick me or manipulate me. We are going to have a nice normal evening or so help me Merlin," she snarled. "No sex for either of you!"

Harry and Nicholas gasped.

"Don't make me ruin Tonks evening too!" Hermione threatened. "Cause you know I can. And you know I will."

"We'll be good." Nicholas meekly assured.

"Promise." A sullen Harry agreed.

Hermione stared the two Harrys down and finally nodded. "Very well."

Nicholas leaned over and gave Hermione a squeeze. "Now you need to drop the privacy charm. Tonks will be here in eleven seconds."

Hermione did just that and counted in her head. Sure enough, exactly when they said she arrived.

"Wotcher. Did I miss anything?" Tonks asked as she sat back down.

Hermione smirked happily and stated. "Not much. I was just making sure these two immature boys promised to be on their best behavior."

The conversation remained pleasant and their meals arrived and they enjoyed their dinners. Just as they were finishing, Albus Dumbledore stood up and addressed the crowd from the podium at the head table. "We are gathered here to award the Order of Merlin, to a fine young man that I have had the privilege of knowing for three decades, including his formative years."

Severus was sitting next to him and was basking in the glory of his moment.

"My good friend, Severus, here believes that we intend to award him the Order of Merlin Second Class for his efforts as a Master of Potions and the rediscovery of The Kiss of Ra. And with that, the ability to cure a great number of previously incurable maladies."

"I know Frank and Alice Longbottom were extremely grateful and owe him their sanity." Albus said with a nod towards the table with Frank, Alice, and Neville. Apparently they were still at the point where just hearing their last name made them laugh, and Frank and Alice couldn't contain their giggles.

"But with some careful review and personal references from myself, and two of our other more notables members, Mr. Potter and Mr. Flamel, we have decided it best to not award Severus an Order of Merlin Second Class."

"I hate you, Potter. You always make me look like an ass!" Severus mumbled while staring down at his dessert plate. Not everyone could hear him but the people nearest the front were all chuckling. Snape continued quietly cursing Potter, Potter spawn, even something about a filthy motherpotter.

"What many of you don't know is the lengths to which my friend Severus has gone to. The troubles and hardships he has faced head on and overcome." Albus orated, trying his best to ignore Severus' angry muttering.

"Many of you here even still only know the masks he has been forced to wear over the years-" Albus abruptly stopped after hearing a mumble of 'a gajillion points from Gryffindor' and whispered angrily at

the pouting man next to him. "For Merlin's sake, Severus, you're getting an Order of Merlin First Class! Now are you going to behave or do I have to put you in time out?"

Severus' angry rabbles ceased and he had a scared look on his face. Whether it was the realization of his award or the threat of a time out, many were not sure. Either answer though brought out more giggles from Frank and Alice Longbottom.

"Pardon me. As I was saying," Albus continued, though he wasn't smiling as much as he had been. "Many of you only know this man next to me as an ass. A bitter, sarcastic, immature, childish, angry ass. He has been forced to play the role of an ass, to ensure that he fit in amongst the Death Eaters, and to not arouse any suspicions as to his role as a spy. For over a decade and a half, he was an ass who was unable to befriend those who he may have wanted to, and he was forced to act friendly with those he was working to bring down.

"His work as a Potions Asster," Albus blushed and cleared his throat with a 'hem-hem.' "Pardon me. Master, is nearly unparalleled in his field. The Kiss of Ra may just be the beginning of a great number of previously impossible ancient potions to be rediscovered, but even if it is the only one, that rediscovery alone has changed and touched a great many lives."

During Albus' warm introduction for Severus, Harry just had a look of happy shock on his face. He whispered to his friends at the table, "I cannot believe that worked."

Nicholas nodded his head. "Me neither. Albus usually sees right through those kinds of things."

Tonks quietly looked at the pair of smiling manboys. "What did you do?"

Harry reached over and squeezed Tonks thigh with a smile. "I told him I was from the future, and in this timeline, it was imperative that he call Severus an 'ass' several times in his introduction."

Tonks smiled and asked, "And he believed that?"

Harry nodded. "I'm as surprised as you are!"

Hermione frowned. "But if it were true, then it would be... Wait a second! He still has free will and can say whatever he wants to!"

Nicholas frowned. "Hmm. I guess informing you that I'm from the future and tonight it is imperative that I bring you to orgasm at least eight times, won't work too well on you. Will it, Hermione?" Tonks had to bite her bottom lip to stop from laughing out loud at how red Hermione just went.

Up at the podium, Albus just looked over at his silently fuming but slightly smiling Potions professor and concluded. "For all the work this young man has done for the magical community, the School of Hogwarts, the advancement of the field of Potions, and in particular the extremely dangerous and important work as a spy against the Dark Lord and Death Eaters, we are pleased to award Severus Snape with an Order of Merlin First Class."

Everyone present at the dinner and award ceremony stood up and cheered. The applause was making the sneering man blush uncontrollably, and he was smiling and enjoying the adulation. At least until he saw Potter stand on his chair and yell, "I love you, Severus!" This brought back the more familiar angry scowl as he focused it intently on Harry. Harry winked at the man on stage and made an obvious show of licking his lips. Severus' angry scowl was filled with embarrassment now. Frank and Alice falling down laughing didn't help matters for him.

"I am going to say something none of you may have ever heard me say. Remember this moment, it will not happen often," Severus began staring at the still giggling crowd. "Thank you."

Laughter erupted from the crowd as many there had never before seen Severus Snape crack a joke. He'd mock and be sarcastic, but never in the interests of humor. Severus was actually smiling. "Wow! People actually laughing at my joke! Lately all I've been getting is shocked stupors whenever I attempt some levity. I was beginning to wonder if Albus was unable to control his accidental magic in his old

age and was sending out confundus charms whenever I'd make him chuckle."

The crowd laughed at the blushing Headmaster sitting next to Snape.

"That wasn't a joke," Severus explained. "He really doesn't have the control he did in his youth."

The crowd was eating it up.

"For Merlin's sake people, it's not funny." Severus continued. "This is a serious issue facing today's senior citizens. This is no laughing matter."

The crowd disagreed and thought Severus should do stand-up.

"Fine. Laugh it up now. Just you wait. You'll see Albus' face scrunch up and then turn into a guilty smile. And everyone in the immediate area will stop what they're doing and stare off into space." Severus was getting a bit angry. Albus was trying to frown at Severus but couldn't stop grinning.

"I'm serious!" Severus exclaimed. "He's dangerous! You never know when-" Severus stopped suddenly and turned to the Headmaster, "Knock it off, Albus!"

Even the Headmaster was laughing now.

Severus arched an eyebrow at the outright laughing the Headmaster was doing. "Do I need to fashion a diaper to contain your magic, Headmaster?"

Albus stopped laughing and was truly frowning at Snape now.

Frank Longbottom cheered, "You tell him, Snivellus!"

Severus smiled and was going to thank the man, before his mind processed the cheer and he settled for a frustrated frown. He shook his head and mumbled "For the love of Harry."

Frank caught his slip-up and felt really bad. "I'm sorry, I really didn't mean to say that Severus. It just slipped out. I didn't mean-" Frank's attention was distracted by his wife's quiet moan. "Is that... is that chocolate?"

Alice pulled the bowl nearer to her and smiled at her husband. He quickly sat down, forgetting why he was standing in the first place.

Severus rolled his eyes. "Anyways, I do appreciate this award. It does mean a lot to me, and I am grateful you have selected to honor me with this. Although, in fairness I feel any Professor who survives seven years of Potter should get a medal."

The Hogwarts faculty in the crowd found this particularly amusing.

"Seeing as I enjoy public speaking almost as much as I enjoy teaching first years, I shall keep this brief." Severus continued with a wicked smile. "Receiving the Order of Merlin has been one of my goals, and I sincerely appreciate you recognizing me for this. I do wish to thank all of you from the bottom of my cold Slytherin heart." Severus finished and sat down. He quickly stood back up and added, "Well except for Potter of course."

The crowd cheered and applauded again for the newest recipient of the Order of Merlin First Class. The evening was winding down as people finished off the last of their desserts and began saying their goodbyes.

Frank and Alice both took one of Neville's hands to help lead him through the crowds. Alice was asking, "Do you think Taco Bell is still open?"

"Mum!" Neville exclaimed. "We're just now leaving dinner."

Frank gasped and smiled. "Taco Bell does sound good."

Neville just groaned and pulled his parents away.

Severus stalked over to Harry, Nicholas, Tonks, and Hermione's table. "Potter." He frowned before wincing at the tickling in his arm and

adding, "Harry." Severus gave him a curt nod. "That was positively Slytherin of you."

Harry just smiled innocently and said, "Come now Severus. I know how important this night was to you. I would never be that devious, now would I?"

Severus' eyes widened and he quickly wished the table "Good night," and walked away while he could.

Nicholas cracked up at Severus' response.

"What did I miss?" Tonks asked. Hermione was looking on curiously too.

Harry smiled and explained, "I can send little messages or bursts of magic along Severus' former Dark Mark. This whole evening he was on edge wondering when I was going to... encourage a response from him."

"And?" Tonks asked.

Harry grinned deviously. "And I never did. The anticipation and anxiety seemed to work pretty good on their own."

Hermione pursed her lips. "Can you really do that much through the link?"

Harry shrugged just as a loud piercing scream rang from the entranceway. It was followed by an angry "Potter!"

"A fair amount," Harry said with his eyes a twinkle.

## CHAPTER NINE

“Who’s the guy with the hood up?”

“Dunno. Prolly the new DADA Professor.”

“You hear anything about who it is?”

“Naw, nuthin.”

“Bollocks. Flamel was pretty good. Wish we still had him.”

“Yeah, he was brilliant. And funny.”

“Think this guy will be any good?”

“Well, Snape seems to hate him. I reckon that’s a good sign.”

Harry was eavesdropping on some of the Gryffindor table and nearly burst out laughing hearing their assessment.

The Headmaster stood up. “Welcome to another year at Hogwarts. I know you’re starving, and traditionally I save the majority of my announcements until after the feast, but I thought you might like something to talk about.” The Headmaster’s eyes were twinkling mightily.

Harry resisted the urge to cuff the Headmaster on the back of his noggin.

“Professor Sprout has retired. Taking over for her in the field of Herbology, I would like you all to welcome, Professor Longbottom.” He finished with a gentle wave towards an extremely nervous Neville. Neville smiled weakly, and stood and waved before sitting back down.

“I am also sorry to say,” the Headmaster continued with a somber face. “Professor Flamel has chosen to leave us once again to pursue an independent research project.”



There were a number of groans throughout the student body.

“In his place, I have managed to hire his partner in that research project. I hope we can all give a warm Hogwarts welcome to Professor Potter.”

And just like that, an entire hall full of students went completely silent.

Every eye in the room was on the figure to the Headmaster’s right, who pulled his hood back, flashed an apprehensive half-smile, and waved. His green eyes and scar were clear as day, and still the entire hall hadn’t made a sound.

A seventh year Slytherin caught a nod from Professor Snape and jumped out of his seat. He fell to his knees and began bowing. “Praise be to Harry!”

In one eerie deafening unified voice, the whole student body yelled back, “Praise be to Potter!” Loud cheers and exclamations of “I love you”, “marry me”, and “I’m seventeen” were heard echoing among the thunderous applause.

Professor Potter just dropped his head and began slowly banging it on the table. The cheering continued, while Harry just sat there resigned.

Professors Snape and Malfoy were seen gritting their teeth and squeezing the arms of their chairs as if their life depended on it.

Professor Granger and Caretaker Tonks had particularly happy grins, while Professor Longbottom was just chuckling and patting Professor Potter on the back. There seemed to be no end to the whistles, the foot stomping, the hands banging and knocking on the tables, or the shouts of joy.

Professors Snape and Malfoy relaxed finally in their seats while Professor Potter just slumped lower into his.

Dumbledore finally quieted the crowd. “Yes, yes. We are all glad to have Professor Potter here. With the departure of Professor Sprout, I

am sorry to say we have no former members of the Hufflepuff house on the faculty. Despite any former house loyalties, I hope you will all welcome Professor Potter as the new Head of Hufflepuff house."

And just like that, the entire Hufflepuff table began cheering again. A small second year girl screamed so loud the ghosts all had to cover their ears. All the females in Hufflepuff seemed to start getting flustered, and most were waving their hands, fanning themselves. The boys were slapping high-fives and giving each other one-armed man hugs.

Harry turned to Albus and whispered. "Umm, Albus. How do I put this... What?"

"Oh. Did you not get the message?" Albus smiled innocently and quietly answered. "I could have sworn I told Nicholas. He assured me he would pass it along."

Harry growled. "Must have slipped his mind."

"The memory is one of the first things to go," Albus explained. "And he is well over 600 years old."

Albus waved the students silent again. "I'll save the rest of the announcements for later. I just have one thing to say before we eat: Page 146 looks pretty good." And with a clap of his hands, the feast had begun.

Chatter had begun at all tables, and there was one person in particular the students were all discussing.

The subject of all the excited whispering was doing his best to ignore the discussions he could hear. He mumbled a question to Professor Longbottom, and got an enthusiastic smile and nod in response.

"Hermione," Harry began. "You should definitely try the pasta. It's delicious."

Hermione nodded. "Alright. I'm not a big pesto fan usually, but... is that oregano?"

Harry shrugged. "It's some kind of tasty spice. Thank Merlin it's not dill, whatever it is."

Tonks had a heaping plateful. "This is delicious!"

Minerva smiled and agreed. "I think the house elves put a splash of oregano in almost everything." Minerva gave a smile and low hum. "And I must say, whatever they did, it tastes divine."

Neville smiled and was nodding his head. Harry gave him a big thumbs up.

Even Snape said after a mouthful, "I don't know what it is, but I don't think I have ever enjoyed eating as much as I am right now."

Albus took a bite of the pasta and his eyes went wide. "Oh sweet Merlin."

Harry smiled innocently. "Something the matter, Albus?"

Albus looked shocked and turned to Harry. "This pasta... this spice... do you realize what this is?"

Harry looked intently at Neville before shaking his head. "No idea. But it is mighty tasty."

Albus stopped him. "This is... this is..." His eyes were wide and his face showed fear and astonishment. "This is my brother Abe's secret recipe!"

Harry choked on his pumpkin juice.

"I've been trying to get him to tell me his secret for years." Albus excitedly explained. "But I could never figure out what his secret ingredient is." His mirthful smile echoed the bliss in his heart. "Oh happy day."

The feast was being enjoyed by all. An excited voice from the Ravenclaw table yelled out, "Bread is awesome! Where's the butter?"

A young Hufflepuff could be overheard raving about, “the best tasting water ever. It’s like being reborn out of a warm water womb. So fresh... so clean.”

Harry was in a bit of a shock. It looked like everyone in the hall was having at least thirds of everything.

Some people were bartering ears of corn for the last chicken drumstick. The majority of the first years were getting awfully sleepy. Partially because they are eleven and just ate approximately about 4 kilos of food each, and partially because some of them had their heads tilted back and were just staring at the ceiling, unmoving.

There were a few areas of the tables where two people snickering would make eye contact and both be caught up in the vortex of a virulent giggle loop, and eventually they would fall to the floor laughing so hard their ribs hurt. They would be unable to even look at their giggle loop buddies without starting up the process again.

The empty trays and bowls for the food disappeared, and desserts replaced them on all the tables. A few ooh’s and ahhh’s rippled through the crowd, as well as several moans of longing. As the students helped themselves to cakes and puddings and lots and lots of brownies, the Headmaster stood up again. “I see our dessert has now arrived, so allow me to finish my announcements. The Forbidden Forest is just that, Forbidden. I really should warn you about detentions or suspensions if you are ever caught in the Forest. But the truth of the matter is, you will die a most gruesome and horrible death if you go into the Forest, and at that point, would then be excused from detention.” Albus explained very solemnly.

“Our caretaker, Miss Tonks, has added frozen catcher’s mitts and salami to the list of banned items.” Albus informed, thinking Tonks did things a bit differently than Argus Filch. He continued, “She has removed vibrating brooms from the list.”

Albus noticed he was losing the student’s attention as small fights began to break out for the last cupcakes and the last biscuits, and bits of pudding.

BOOM!

The entire castle shook as the loud rumbling followed a distant loud bang.

BOOM!

It went again. Albus and Harry looked at each other wondering if either knew what was going on.

BOOM!

There was a rhythm and consistent timing to the bangs. Harry was trying to have a conversation with Hogwarts, and all of a sudden he just broke out in loud laughs. The entire hall was silent in fear wondering what was going on.

"Is it giants?" One timid voice asked.

"I think we may be under attack." Another boy said.

"Another Dark Lord? Or that Dark Lady?"

Harry was snickering and patted Albus on the shoulder. "I'll take care of this one. You just calm everybody down." Harry chuckled. "I think the students are acting a bit more paranoid than usual." And with a pop, Harry disappeared from the Great Hall.

BOOM!

Harry reappeared in the kitchens right as the castle shook and rumbled.

There was a house elf in a more professional uniform than any of the others elves. He was barking out orders. "We's bad elves! We's shameful! We's failed Masters! Again!"

And before Harry could interrupt, over a hundred house elves took two running steps and knocked themselves off their feet against the stone wall at the same time.

BOOM!

Harry just watched them slowly get up. They were shaking their heads, and were obviously disoriented.

The head elf just kept going. "We's no good. We's don't deserve such good Masters. We's should be punished. Again!"

"STOP!" Harry yelled.

Almost all the elves immediately stopped in mid-step. A couple of them weren't as coordinated as the others, or maybe just hit their heads on a soft spot last time, and were unable to bring their bodies to a complete stop and just softly smacked into the wall.

"Master Potter," the head elf said dropping his face in shame.

"If you need it as an order," Harry began. "I am ordering you not to punish yourselves." Harry eyed every frightened elf in the kitchen to show them that he was serious. "Now," Harry said addressing the large crowd. "Can you tell me what on earth is going on? Why were you punishing yourselves?"

A cacophony of high-pitched sad voices broke out. "We's bad elves!"

"We's shameful!"

"We's no good trash!"

"We's don't deserve such good Masters!"

"STOP!" Harry bellowed and again got silence. "I'm asking why you seem to think you're bad elves."

"We's don't know what happened!"

“We’s made the feast.”

“WE’S RAN OUT OF FOOD!”

“We’s not made enough!”

“Food’s all gone!”

“Oh, the horror! The horror!”

“We’s not have enough!”

“It’s like a whole school of Ron Wheezys!”

Harry was biting his tongue trying his best not to laugh at all the scared sad little faces. He couldn’t keep from smiling as he tried to calm the elves. “Alright. I get it. Don’t worry. This is not your fault.” Harry was snickering a little. “Listen, you had no way of knowing that this year they would be eating significantly more than previous years. You made an excellent delicious feast and planned it around the idea that you wouldn’t have a school full of Ron Wheezy-sized appetites.”

A few of the elves were looking at each other, seeing the reason in what Harry was saying.

“I think I can help you, for the rest of tonight. But you may want to use the seasonings Professor Longbottom provided a little more sparingly in the future. Apprentice Dobby!”

“Yes, Master Harry?” Dobby said right as he appeared. “Wait a minute. Why’s you’s all standing around!”

“We’s bad elves!”

“We’s ran out of food!”

“We’s should be punished!”

Harry just smiled and shook his head. "Dobby? Do you think you can bring over, let's say 20 kilos of tortilla chips, 10 kilos of salsa, and 20 kilos of nacho cheese?"

Dobby nodded with a smile. "Of course, Master," he said before disappearing with a pop.

Harry smiled at the elves. "Alright guys. Nachos are always a necessity to keep around for emergencies like this. Now, I meant it. I don't want to hear about you punishing yourselves. Some things are out of your control, and sometimes you make mistakes. You can serve Hogwarts better, by keeping your wits about you, staying in good health, and learning from your mistakes. Punishing yourself doesn't help anyone."

The elves seemed to understand Harry's orders much better now and they felt Hogwarts give them a sort of magical hug.

Dobby reappeared with the necessary supplies. Harry addressed the elves again. "Now, don't be shy about asking for help if you need it. Feel free to seek me out if you have any sort of emergency. Or feel free to ask for my apprentice, Dobby. He can speak for me in many instances. Go on and send up some chips and salsa, and nachos to the Great Hall. I suspect everyone's a little worried up there, and won't be hungry for too much longer. Did anyone hurt themselves and need help healing?"

A bunch of confused heads all shook negatively.

"Are you guys going to be alright? Crisis averted and all that rot?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

Some smiles and a lot of nodding was the answer Harry got. Albus was at a complete loss. The entire castle had been shaking. Not even a giant could have been rumbling that hard. He kept probing Hogwarts through his Headmaster's bond, and the nearest he could figure was that the castle was extremely amused. He had the student's all stay in the Great Hall until they knew it was safe to head back to their common rooms.



It seemed there was an awful lot of speculation going on, but there weren't any worried faces as far as Albus could tell. He wondered if Harry realized just how much safer and calmer the people were, knowing he was on the case. The theories that were spreading were quite amusing.

"I'm sure it's a giant."

"It's not a giant. It's a whole colony."

"Professor Potter could prolly stun the whole lot with one spell."

"Forget magic, Professor Potter's probably wrestling a giant to the ground right now."

"Oooooooh! Nachos!"

"I bet he could bare-knuckle box the whole colony at once. Is that salsa hot or mild?"

"It's mild. And probably once the giants saw Professor Potter they just gave up."

A few gasps and some cheers began again. "Look! Professor Potter is back!" Everyone jumped to their feet to applaud their conquering hero.

"Ha! I knew it! Not a scratch on him," a Hufflepuff fifth year yelled.

Harry nodded and smiled at the Headmaster before turning to address the student body. "The crisis is over. It is safe. You're all free to head back to your common rooms now."

"Hey!" Albus indignantly exclaimed. "Dismissing them is my job."

Harry mockingly rolled his eyes and stuck out his tongue at the Headmaster.

A brave Gryffindor spoke up and drew the attention of everyone who was about to leave. "Professor Potter! Was it..." he stuttered. "Was it giants?"

Harry smiled winningly at the boy. "No. Not giants. Little guys." Harry smirked and put both his hands over his heart and sighed dreamily. "But with giant hearts."

Hermione couldn't believe how cheesy Harry was and cuffed him upside the head.

As the students filed out, a couple Ravenclaws could be heard saying, "I told you it wasn't giants! I told you."

"But who could have guessed it was nargle-infested undead zombies that feast on the hearts of giants!"

"Professor Potter could have!"

## CHAPTER TEN

“Lemon Drop?”

“No! And stop stalling!”

“Hot Tamale?”

“For the love-... Oh, yes. Thank you.” Minerva was distracted by the tasty candy. She was briefly wondering if she had been bewitched, considering she just ate a larger meal than she ever had in her life. And even still, that chewy burst of cinnamon flavor sounded very tantalizing. She proceeded to munch on Hot Tamales unconsciously. “Dammit, Albus. It’s just unnatural!”

“Minerva, I should hardly think you’d be against a May-December romance. Especially at your age.”

A low rumbling warning hiss was the only response Professor McGonagall gave into between chewing her Hot Tamales.

Albus bit his tongue and didn’t think his Deputy Headmistress would like him to point out what a striking similarity she had to Severus when she glared at him like that. “Besides, Minnie, I have no right to interfere in any of my faculty’s private lives.”

Minerva just looked at him and yelled. “Hunh!”

“Oh stop that!” Albus admonished. “The rules change in wartime.”

Minerva reiterated her disbelieving, “Hah!”

“Why do you even care, Minnie? You know he would never hurt Miss... oh...” A smile of dawning comprehension threatened to split the Headmaster’s face in half. “Oh ho-ho-hoh! My word! Minnie! You vixen!”

Minerva was blushing like gangbusters and refused to look Albus in the eye.

“I had no idea you had feelings for-”

“I don’t have feelings for anybody!” Minerva quickly interrupted. “I mean I have feelings...but not those... I mean... Oh for heaven’s sake.”

Albus was grinning brightly. “You know they are not seeing each other exclusively, Minerva. And if anyone can appreciate someone as experienced as you, it would be-”

“Oh shove a sock in it Albus. I’m not experienced. I’m old.” Minerva frowned and pouted. “And she’s young and brilliant and far more attractive, and true, her breasts a little too pert still, but she will grow into them.”

“You know you could-”

“I will not magic them!”

“Minerva, please. Even if you won’t magic them, the muggles have created one of the most ingenious devices. It’s called a wonderbra. The way it lifts and separates, well, if that’s not magic in the presence of muggles I don’t know what is.” Albus explained. “Besides Minerva, compared to Nicholas, both you and Miss Granger are mere babes.”

Minerva blushed Gryffindor crimson. “Why Albus, I mean ... Thank you but...”

“I meant ‘babe’ as in baby.”

“Oh right.” Minerva corrected. “Of course.”

Albus rolled his eyes. “As I was saying, Minnie, you should go for it. I definitely think Nicholas would benefit from the influence of a mature woman.”

“You, you really think so?” Minerva asked hopefully.

“Absolutely. Heck, if you like I’ll make sure and keep Hermione extra busy.”

“Oh Albus, really. You don’t need to...” Minerva paused and had a calculating look on her face. She finished resolutely, “Yes. Do that.”

Albus was biting his bottom lip. “Considering his life experience, you know, he may appreciate you utilizing traditional wizarding Scottish courting manners.”

“Oh don’t be ridiculous!”

“It was just a suggestion.”

“A ridiculous one.”

Albus shrugged. “I wish you the best of luck. And remember, Nicholas likes a strong, forward woman.”

Minerva blushed a little again and thinned her lips into a small smile. “Thank you, Albus. Good night, Headmaster.”

As soon as Minerva had left his office, Albus finally let out the chuckles he was holding in. “Oh happy day.”

“Well hello my little puffers.” Harry said as he entered the Hufflepuff common room. He looked around their common room. It had the warmth of the Gryffindor common room, although without the windows. He saw a few fake charmed windows that seemed to be showing a fluffy sunny day. Even though it was night time and dark out. He asked his most pressing question, “Are the walls... padded?”

“Professor Potter!” yelled the first student to spot their new head of house.

“Hiya, Mr. Adams, isn’t it?”

“Yes sir. Ryan Adams. How... how did you know my name?”

Harry smiled. "Oh, as soon as I found out I was going to be the new Head of Hufflepuff, I asked Hogwarts what she could tell me about you all." Harry answered, all the while thinking that he also taught them all last year, and three years ago too.

"Good evening," Harry said as he realized every eye in the common room was focused on him. "No one is required to sit around here and talk to me, but I just wanted to introduce myself and give you all a chance to get to know me."

"Know you, Professor Potter?" A seventh year girl, Harry recognized as Rose Zeller, said. "We all know you, Professor."

"Well I realize some of you might know whatever rubbish Witches Weekly has been printing, but that's not quite the same as knowing me. Like for instance, I bet none of you knew that this is the first time I have ever been in the Hufflepuff common room." Harry said with a smile. "I'd been in all the others back when I was student, but never made the trip into this one. It is... a bit different from what I would have guessed."

Ryan nodded. "Yeah, I know. Padded walls."

"But they're fun!" A third year named Herman Crabbe yelled out before jumping up and running head first into the wall. He knocked himself on his arse, but wobbled his way to his feet with a smile.

"Ahh. Of course." Harry said giving all of his little puffs a once over. "So anyways, the Old Man just sprung it on me, there at the feast that I was going to be your new Head of House, so I apologize for not being better prepared. And I realize, the silly newspapers and other rags may paint me out to be something more than I am. I wanted to make sure you all would know you can and should come to me with any issues you have. I'm not some mythical legendary hero, and I'm certainly not a son of God or immortal, despite any dirty filthy lies any dirty filthy Potions Professors might have been spreading."

There were a few laughs and some of the tension was leaving the room.

“So to start with, anyone who wants to sit here and chat is welcome, or you can ignore me and go to bed. I’m usually a pretty private person, but tonight I’ll be answering any questions you have within reason. Sound good?”

There were a few nods, and a third year boy named Jacob Wienerschnitzel raised his hand.

“Yes, Mr. Wienerschnitzel?”

“Where have you been?”

Harry smiled at the question he expected to get first. “I’ve been traveling all over the world, though I have been around the Isles for a lot of it. I was in Hogwarts for a large portion of last year too. I’ve got a secret research project, with my friend Nicholas. I cannot answer much about the secret project but I’ll tell you it’s about an extremely potent newly discovered magical substance.”

Harry saw every girl had their hand in the air and was waving them waiting to be called on. Harry finally spotted a boy with his hand up. “Yes, Mr. Cobb?”

“Is it true you’re more powerful than Merlin?”

Harry sighed and shook his head. “It is true that I am quite powerful, but so are the Headmaster and a lot of other people. There is no ‘magical meter’ we have to measure a wizard or witch’s potential, so it is impossible to compare. Personally I find comparing me, a self-proclaimed immature punk kid, to the father of modern magic awfully ludicrous.”

Harry nodded to a fourth year boy.

“Why do you call yourself an immature punk kid? I mean, you killed Voldemort!”

Harry sighed and shrugged. “Yes I did. But remember I had a lot of help from many others who are probably more heroic than me. As for the immaturity, I guess it’s because I wasted most of my childhood

training to fight Death Eaters and the Dark Lord. And now that they're basically gone, I've been trying to cash in on all the fun I missed out on by not getting to be a normal kid. And on that note, do not let it leave this common room, but I highly encourage any and all pranks." Harry said with a wicked smile. "Particularly on filthy fibbers."

There were a number of chuckles.

Harry realized now only the girls had hands up. Harry tried out the safest route and nodded to a new first year, Samantha Fickersly. "Yes, Miss Fickersly?"

She smiled brightly. "My first question is about the Elixir of Life-"

"No!" Harry replied immediately. "That article was complete rubbish. Next question please."

Samantha huffed angrily. "Fine." She quickly turned warm again and smiled brightly, "Are you dating anyone?"

And every other Hufflepuff girl's hand went down as the room went silent.

"We're nearing territory that might be a bit too personal for a student-Head of House relationship." Harry diplomatically answered. "But I said I'd answer, and the answer is yes, I am seeing a few people. None seriously or exclusively and any mentions of love or marriage would be premature enough to have me running for the hills."

A couple of girls started clapping before they realized what they'd done and none of them could meet Harry's eyes.

"Is Miss Tonks one of them?" a curious student asked.

"Yes, I have been out with Miss Tonks a couple of times, and she has been one of my closest friends for a few years now. She taught me how to do this." Harry answered as he turned his nose into a pig's snout.



Some of the younger students cheered at the display of magic but very few seemed to understand that it meant that Harry was a metamorphmagus.

"How'd you do that?" an unsure sixth year boy asked.

"Why magic of course," Harry answered and got some groans and rolls of the eyes in response. Harry took this as an excellent sign.

"Is Professor Granger one of them?" a girl asked.

Harry paused and thought about the best way to answer this one. "Hermione is probably my best friend, and certainly beautiful. But I'm pretty sure last I heard she was seeing Professor Flamel."

"What!" a seventh year boy named Evan Morgan yelled. "He's old enough to be her..." he seemed to be doing some high level mathematics in his head. "...ancestor." He finished weakly.

Harry chuckled. "That may be true, but you're only as old as you feel, and I think Nicky might even feel younger than Hermy does. Not to mention, there's not a lot of options for Nicky to date closer to his age." Harry paused and added. "And stay somewhat within the realm of humans."

Harry saw the frown Mr. Morgan was making and was thinking there were a few people with crushes on their History of Magic Professor. "Yes, Miss Gibbons?" Harry said as he pointed at the fourth year girl.

"Are you my daddy?"

Harry would have choked had he been drinking. Instead he just belched out the word, "Bluh?" He shook his head, and tried again. This time he said, "What?"

"I'm not sure who my real daddy is, but my mum knows it was a wizard. And sometimes it just seemed to make sense that... well... you know, you could be... him."

Harry was a bit scared to see all the students seemed to think this was possibly true. And then Harry saw Amanda Gibbons really seemed to wish that Harry was her Dad. "Miss Gibbons, you do realize I was probably about 7 when you were born, don't you?"

She dropped her head in sadness. "Oh."

"That puts it at about four years before I learned magic was real. Heck, you probably learned about magic before I did."

"Really?" she asked, seemingly forgetting she should be depressed.

Harry nodded. "Really. And if you want some private assistance determining your ancestry, I'd be happy to help you with that. As much as I disliked my instructor in school, I still know a thing or two about making a heritage potion."

"What have you got against Potions?" Ryan Adams defended, "I thought it was subtle science and exact art without all the silly wand-waving."

"Bah!" Harry said with a wave of his hand. "It's as much magic as soup is. Now Alchemy, Alchemy is what Potions wishes it was. That's where the good stuff is."

"What's the difference?" Rose Zeller asked.

"It's... well, I mean... it's..." Harry paused and finally answered. "Potions is to Alchemy, as Professor Snape is to Professor Flamel." Harry finished with a sharp nod.

"Ohhhh." The entire house said as they realized just how big a difference there was.

"Alright guys. It's getting late, and I just remembered something I need to tell the Headmaster." Harry said as he stood up to leave. "My door will always be open to you. Often I'll be in my office adjacent to the DADA classroom. And if you ever need me immediately, particularly if there's any sort of emergency, all you have to do is to concentrate really hard and think Potty."

Harry frowned. "Stop looking at me like that, Mr. Cobb. It is the same magic that house elves use to know when they're being called. My apprentice, Dobby, christened me Potty, after my last name. It is an extremely useful tool and method of communication."

Darren Cobb had the decency to look ashamed.

"And you may also call on my apprentice if you need help with anything too. Same concentration, just call for Dobby instead. He's a great friend, and he's getting pretty cheeky."

"Dobby?" a second year named Linda Miller asked.

With a pop, he appeared. "Yes Miss Miller. I's Dobby."

Linda yelped at the unexpected appearance.

"And I will never betray my Master," Dobby said with a solemn face. It shifted into a wicked smile and he stage whispered to the House, "But Dobby's gots lotsa dirt on all the other Professors." Dobby nodded and disappeared with a pop.

"Yeah, that's Dobby. He can be a great friend and useful ally, but for those of you familiar with house elves, make sure you understand he's a bit different from normal. In a good way. Good night my little puffers." Harry said as he left the Hufflepuff common room.

Harry arrived at the Headmaster's office and entered after knocking. "Oh no, Albus. What's got you so tickled?"

Albus' eyes twinkled and he replied. "I just had a wonderful conversation with Minnie. It has lifted my spirits even more than I was expecting."

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Let me guess. The age difference no longer bothers her and she's finally stopped denying your impertinent advances?"

Albus grinned brightly. "I believe she places little value in her suitors' ages, but I assure you it is not my heart that she yearns for."

Harry sighed. "Whatever. Anyways, I just wanted to warn you, I've got a friend coming by to help me put a little fright into my first few upper years' classes. Perhaps even some hands on defense."

"Do I know this friend?"

Harry shook his head. "I don't think you've ever had the pleasure of meeting Bob, but he dropped by to visit over the summer, and he agreed to come by again sometime during this first week. I just didn't want you to complain about me springing surprises on you."

Albus nodded. "Very well. I look forward to meeting this Bob character. Tell me, is he a Vampire?"

"Nope. And stop asking. It'll be a surprise."

"Oh dear I don't like the sound of that. He's not a Lycan, is he?"

"Nope. And I'm done answering. You'll know Bob when you see him. And why in the world did you make me the Head of Hufflepuff House?"

Albus smiled. "There weren't any Hufflepuff alumni on staff. The kids'll love you. Hogwarts recommended you. And despite teaching for the first year under this name, you already have shown yourself to be quite adept with children in your previous years teaching."

"Oh," Harry responded. "So it wouldn't have anything to do with you trying to make me become more attached and entrenched here. Not the sort of subtle manipulation to attempt to get me to stay in the position under my real name for many years to come?"

"Come now Harry." Albus said with a pouting frown. "You know me better than that."

"Yeah, I know you alright." Harry grumbled. "Good night, Albus."

Severus removed the note card from the unknown owl. He turned to Draco, who was enjoying his breakfast. "Look at that. With my Order of Merlin, I now receive a complimentary lifetime subscription to ... a muggle magazine? Called Sassy?"

Draco looked up and raised an eyebrow. "Sassy? Never heard of it."

Severus shook his head. "Me neither. But it sounds like it's about rotten Gryffindors."

Neville overheard their conversation and quickly was tugging on Harry's sleeve.

Harry looked at Neville inquiringly. "Mmm-hmm?"

"Harry!" Neville whispered. "Didn't someone anonymously give me majority ownership of a muggle magazine named Sassy for my birthday?"

Harry smiled. "Why Neville, I do believe you are correct."

Neville looked dumbfounded. "I wasn't sure if that part was real or just a side-effect of the cake my mum baked me."

Harry nodded and explained, "It used to be this great magazine for teenage girls. Taught them where to put their hands, when to use teeth, how to get an abortion without your parents finding out and stuff like that. Until it was bought by the wrong guys and next thing you know it's nothing but a bunch of useless tripe."

Neville was looking at Harry as though he was completely insane.

"If your feeling adventurous, you could revamp it and try to regain some of its former glory. Perhaps even our esteemed colleague, Severus, could become the face of the new Sassy."

Neville barked out a laugh at Harry. "Oh yes, we definitely need more sallow-skinned greasy-haired teenage girls."

Harry overheard Draco mumbling about rotten Gryffindors first thing in the morning, and sent him a sharp burst of pleasure. He yelped and jumped out of his seat. "Dammit Potter. You can't just go and zap me whenever you feel like it!"

Harry challenged him. "I can't?"

Draco blustered, "What... But... it's against the law!"

"Really?" Harry mocked back. "And just what law is that?"

"But... I mean... it's just the same as if I cursed Longbottom in the back whenever he wasn't suspecting it and I felt like cursing him."

"Not exactly, although I think Neville might surprise you if you actually tried to do that."

"Argh," Draco said. "Fine. But you know I'm going to be sending curses at you."

Harry smirked. "I always assume you're going to do that anyway." Harry noticed Draco seemed to be getting agitated and sent a calming effect through his mark. "Relax, Draco. If I was really trying to antagonize you, I'd just tell the rest of the school that sandy-"

"No!" Draco screamed and cast a quick, but strangely inappropriate charm at Harry. Harry knew it was coming before it was ever cast, and he didn't feel like using the rings in front of the student body just yet, so he calmly stuck his hand in the air and backhanded the spell straight back at Draco. Draco's eyes widened comically and he dropped to the floor to duck. The orangish brown spell smacked Professor Snape right in the ear as he was drinking his juice.

The effects were immediate. And the entire hall just sat there silently, completely afraid to laugh. Unluckily for Severus this was not a spell that could be countered. It would only last about a day, but it was unavoidable. Everyone immediately began dreading Potions class today, as it would forever be known as the day Severus Snape had a large full bushy perm. It looked as though he had Professor Granger's

hair, if she had just been dunked in oil. It was extremely curly, shiny, and black.

Harry was snickering knowing he was probably the only person who could get away with snickering right now. He handed a camera to Neville and whispered, "Just something to think about."

Severus snarled and growled right into the camera when Neville said, "Say cheese."

Draco went completely pale and ran sprinting out of the Great Hall. Severus slowly stood and was going to try and leave the Hall with some dignity.

With a pop, Apprentice Dobby appeared. He calmly addressed the Potions Professor. "Excuse me, Professor Snape? I believe you're letting your soul glow." Dobby made a face that was his attempt at a sneer, but really looked more like someone had hooked his cheek and was tugging it away from him. "You's might want to have that looked at."

A ripple of uncontrollable laughter erupted from the students as Snape looked murderous.

Harry was cracking up. He lifted his hand high in the air. "Excellent work, my apprentice. Excellent."

With a pop, Dobby disappeared and immediately reappeared five feet up in the air. He smacked his Master a high-five and fell to the ground. "Thank you, Master." With another pop he disappeared from the Great Hall.

Neville just smiled at Harry, "Oh, he's good."

Harry nodded as tears began to form in his eyes. "It's moments like these I remember just why I wanted to become a teacher."

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

“Enter.” The voice called before Hermione even had the chance to knock.

“Headmaster?” Hermione asked. “Minerva said you wanted to see me.”

“You’ll call her Minerva, but you won’t call me Albus?” the old man pouted.

“I call you Albus all the time. But I wasn’t sure you were alone, so I elected to refer to you more formally.” Hermione responded diplomatically. “Speaking of, didn’t I hear you talking to someone?”

Albus smiled. “I was just conversing with some of the portraits.”

Hermione noticed they all were pretending to be asleep, though more than a few eyes were cracked open. “The portraits! Of course! They’re not bound by that immature manchild’s secrecy spell!”

Albus shook his head. “Sadly, they are. The ones in here are duty and loyalty bound to the current Headmaster, and as far as magic is concerned, in here they are an extension of me.”

Hermione sighed. Another option grounded before it even took off. “Hmm. It’s not so much that I want to ruin the Flamel name, as it is I’m tired of that cheeky brat getting the best of us!”

Albus smiled. “Speaking of the manchild, I trust that lately, you have been taking better care of his gift? The Magical Tome?”

Hermione blushed a bit. “Oh yes, sir. I’ve been extremely careful with it.”

“Excellent, Hermione! Excellent.” Albus said with a twinkle. “Because if you are up for it, I was hoping you might be willing to take on a significant project.”



Hermione got all warm and fuzzy thinking about a new project. "Certainly sir. I don't have much work to do on the dementor blood anymore, so I have some free time."

"Lovely," Albus said with a flourish of his hands. "Because I thought it would be well worth our time to craft some new Magical Tomes for our own Hogwarts library."

And at that moment in the Headmaster's office, Hermione's eyes twinkled for the very first time. Albus was a little embarrassed at her twinkling and wondered if he should look away, since it was her first time. "I would be honored, sir." She said proudly puffing out her chest. This time Albus did look away.

"I thought you might like this." Albus explained. "With one of the original Tomes you should be able to recreate the effects and perhaps even improve on them. I'm not sure how complex the project may be. For all I know you might even be able to get them to link with your original Tome. And of course, once you're far enough into the project, I'd be happy to provide some of my own personal manuscripts and books that are a bit too dangerous for our library."

There was Hermione's twinkle again. "That would be wonderful, Albus. Thank you so very much for trusting me with this task. I won't let you down, sir." Hermione said as she got up and left his office.

"Of that, I have no doubt." Albus bid her a good day.

It was just a few minutes later that the Head Boy frantically came scrambling up to his office. "Headmaster!" he yelled from the steps.

He was out of breath from running. "Head-" he panted, "-master!"

"Mr. Kirke, calm down." The Headmaster ordered. "Now, compose yourself, and tell me what the problem is."

Colin Kirke, younger brother to Andrew Kirke, caught his breath and explained. "The lake..." He took another deep breath. "Boat... rowing..."

Albus smiled. "Take a moment and wait until you can tell me a complete sentence."

Colin nodded. After a few moments, he calmly explained. "There is a large dementor rowing a boat across the Hogwarts Lake."

Albus briefly wanted to scold Colin for thinking that 'lake', 'boat', and 'rowing' were the most important words he had to get out when he was still catching his breath. And then Albus' mind processed what the young man had just said. He leapt out his office and down the hall, running until he saw the lake. He was thankful to realize, the boat was only two-thirds of the way across, and he had a moment to analyze the situation. He was a bit disturbed to realize that it really was a large dementor. Albus had his shields up full and even hundreds of feet away he was feeling the effects of this beast.

He hurriedly ordered the students back to their common rooms, and asked the first Prefect he spotted, Drew Bower, to go get Professor Potter.

All of a sudden Albus felt the air get a lot colder real fast. The area of the lake around the dementor's boat froze over and the chill was spreading across the surface very briskly.

The dementor slowly stood up from the now frozen unmoving boat. His back was still facing away from Albus. A quick snap of its head, and the black cloaked creature was staring right at the Headmaster.

Albus, who had never seen a dementor move that fast, as they were not known for their speed, could not stop the fear that flood his body. And it wasn't just because his shields were being pounded on.

The dementor kept his gaze firm on the Headmaster. A raspy, ancient sounding voice quietly broke the silence. "Duummmmmbledorrrre," the voice called. "Dummmmmmmbledore," it repeated.

Albus could tell this dementor was stronger than any he had ever seen before. His shields were beginning to crumble under the power of this creature. He wasn't Albus Dumbledore for nothing though.

Mustering together all the power and happiness he could, he bellowed, "Expecto Patronum!"

A brilliant, glowing, bright white phoenix burst forth from his wand. The magical protector knew only what it was here to do. In a wide arc to gain speed, the phoenix flew up and came circling in as fast as it could to drive back this dementor.

In a movement almost too fast for the human eye, a shriveled decaying bony hand snapped out and clenched tightly around the head of the patronus. The dementor kept its gaze on the Headmaster, and somehow held on to the incorporeal glowing, ghostly spell. It held the phoenix's head to its shadowed and hidden face. A grotesque, thick tongue snaked out and grabbed hold of the struggling phoenix's head. It pulled the head back into the shadow of the hood, and a loud crunch was heard, followed by a spurt and a gush of crimson blood from beneath this creature's cloak.

Albus just stood there unmoving. Fright and shock gave way to disbelief. His mind simply could not process the idea, that a dementor just bit the head off of his phoenix patronus.

"Duuummmmmbledorrrre," the raspy voice continued. The dementor began gliding closer to the Headmaster who could only stand there and watch.

"Duuummmmmmydorrrrrkk," it said. And that gave Albus pause. He was now realizing the effects of the dementor were lessening significantly, despite the quickly diminishing distance between the dementor and him. Albus was feeling much better and the temperature was rising.

It was then, that two things happened simultaneously for Albus. The first was his DADA Professor finally decided to show up. Albus noticed because he strode right up next to the Headmaster, and struck a pose. He smiled that annoyingly cheeky smile and bellowed, "I'll save you!" with his hands on his hips. After holding the pose for a couple seconds, he snapped back into action and walked right up to the dementor. But it was just as Harry appeared that the Headmaster noticed something else. There was a muggle sticker attached to the

dementor's cloak. It clearly read, "Hello. My name is Bob." And Albus had the feeling he was the butt of someone's joke.

He watched Harry waggle his finger, apparently scolding the dementor. The dementor and Defense Professor gave each other a brief one-armed manly hug. And then the dementor waved Harry closer to tell him a secret. It looked as though the dementor was going to suck Harry's soul out through his ear. A decayed, bony hand lifted up, apparently ensuring no one could read the dementor's lips.

Hopefully it was speaking because Professor Potter was giggling. It appeared as though dementor whispers tickled, as Harry kept snickering and snorting. Occasionally, he swung his hand up to bat away the ticklish dementor and would effeminately exclaim, "Stop!" before giggling again.

Harry and the dementor were looking over at the Headmaster, when Harry yelled "Crap! Someone's coming." Harry addressed the Headmaster in a quick whisper. "Albus! Shh! Play along."

The Headmaster just nodded and saw Drew Bower, the sixth year prefect he'd sent for Professor Potter, coming running up yelling, "I found one! I got one, Professor!" The dementor's chill filled the air, though not nearly as severely as it had when the lake had frozen. The voice rasped out, "Pottttttteerrrrrrr."

"Accio!" Harry yelled and the teddy bear flew out of Mr. Bower's hands. "Go back to your common room, Mr. Bower. Thank you."

Albus watched Harry appear to be giving the dementor in front of him his full attention. But the Headmaster could tell he was checking if Mr. Bower was running back to his common room, or watching them. Naturally, Mr. Bower was most definitely watching the action and only taking slow steps backwards.

The dementor's powerful ancient hoarse voice wheezed out, "FFFeeeeeeeeed mmeeeeeee!"

Albus saw Harry's hand glow with magic and cast some sort of spell onto the teddy bear. Harry took a step back and held the teddy bear

up in front of him straight at the dementor as some sort of shield. The dementor began to glide toward Harry and the teddy bear, when the teddy's eyes opened wide and its mouth began to move. "Hi. My name is Teddy Ruxpin. Can you and I be friends?"

The dementor let out a snarl of rage and snatched the teddy bear right from Harry's hands. It was letting out a high-pitched squeal as it lowered its head over the top of the teddy bear and proceeded to give it the infamous dementor's kiss. There was a sort of mist and glowing white smoke being sucked from the bear and into the darkened mouth of the creature.

Harry turned and yelled to the student, "Mr. Bower! Your common room, please!"

Drew Bower apparently recognized an order from the most powerful wizard in the world when he heard one and turned and sprinted back into the castle.

The dementor pulled the teddy bear away from him, apparently satiated now.

The teddy bear sprung to life again. "Hi. My name is Teddy Ruxpin. Can you and I be friends?"

The dementor screeched and again tried to suck the soul from the toy.

When this process was repeated a third time, Albus saw the dementor hesitate, and once Mr. Bower was inside the castle and out of sight, it began to hack and cough in what was unmistakably laughter.

Harry at this point couldn't take it any longer and he too fell to the ground rolling around cracking up.

The coughing and hacking dementor spoke up in a strangely normal voice. "I can't believe you just made me do that!"

Harry snickered out, "I can't believe you actually did that."

“A Teddy Ruxpin!” the dementor exclaimed. “I haven’t even thought about one of these in years.”

Harry chuckled. “I’m a little scared that he was able to locate a Teddy Ruxpin in Hogwarts. He asked how he could help and I suggested he find me a Teddy Ruxpin, as they are ‘like a chew toy for a dementor. Keeps ‘em occupied so you can wrangle together your flock.’”

The dementor began coughing more laughter, “Harry, the dementor shepherd! Hey, you deserve another title!”

Albus cleared his throat loudly and asked, “a chew toy?”

Harry apologized. “Oh, I’m sorry. Where are my manners? Albus, I would like you to meet Bob. Bob, this is venerable Headmaster, Albus Dumbledore, Chief Warlock of the Woozenwhatsit, Supreme BugRump of the Interfederation and all the rest of that rubbish.”

Albus frowned. “That was nearly insultingly awful, Harry, Boy-Who-Lived, Savior of the Wizarding World, the immortal Favorite Son of God, Shepherd of Dementors, Elixir of Life fun factory-”

Bob raised his hand and you could hear the amusement in his voice when he interrupted, “That one was me.”

“Really?” Albus said with a smile. “I like you already, Bob.”

“That’s good to hear, Albus,” Harry said. “Because I told Bob, if he could make it across the lake like a first year, you would let him join the school with the first years.”

Albus stared at Harry and couldn’t seem to believe his ears.

“Kidding!” Harry exclaimed. “But man your face just now was brilliant.” Harry fell back into giggles again.

Bob apparently saw Harry was not going to be any help. “You’ll have to excuse him, Headmaster. Harry informed me, you would never allow me onto the school grounds unless I permitted you to meet the

real me as opposed to 'Potttttterrrrrrrrrr'. I thought the idea of arriving like the first years would be fun, as well as ensure I was far enough away from any students until we met.”

Albus nodded, still a bit confused reconciling his impression of dementors with this, relatively gentle character named Bob. “I appreciate the sentiment. I take it you can fully control your magical effects of cold and memory leeching?”

Bob nodded. “Yes, I can keep it completely reigned in, though it takes a little effort. If I ever fear it may be a problem I can leave instantaneously. Harry said I could help him scare some of the students into shape. I do have an image to maintain, so around the students I will only let a little of my power loose. No more than I did just now for Mr. Bower. Although for you, I was almost pushing at half strength. That was an impressive patronus considering the strain you were under.”

“Great Merlin!” Albus exclaimed. “That was only half strength.”

Harry smirked. “Yeah, Bob here is probably a bit stronger than most dementors you’ve seen, Albus.”

Albus could only numbly agree. “Well, you certainly seem... capable. So you have my permission to help Harry in his classes as long as you can assure the safety of your presence. Although, seeing as I have met the real Bob, I would love it if you would come by so we could have a nice long chat.”

Bob nodded his cloaked hood. “Certainly, Headmaster. We can trade Potter horror stories, perhaps.”

“I’m sure you have some good ones.” Albus added with a smile.

“Oh my, yes,” Bob replied before turning to Harry, “Does he... ?”

Harry nodded. “Yup. He does.”

Bob almost cackled with glee. "Oh goodie! Since you know about Nicky, I can even tell you about the time Wesley and I got him back for the flatulence powder in the salt shaker."

Albus gasped excitedly. "You knew Wesley?"

"Of course," Bob replied. "You really know a guy's got solid strength of character when he'll stand by you in spite of dementor farts."

Harry chuckled and winced in memory, "Oh good gravy."

"Dementor farts are probably worse than what your imagining, so let's just leave it at that." Bob explained to Albus. "So anyway, the next morning, Harry woke up, with an empty old female dementor's cloak. I came raging in wondering where my virgin daughter had disappeared to."

Albus quickly came up with about a dozen questions just from that last statement but decided to merely say, "Go on."

Bob saw they were almost to the castle and just whispered, "Long story short, Harry was in tears, begging us to exorcise the demon he could feel kicking around inside his womb."

Harry mumbled, "I still have nightmares about a dementor sucking out my-"

Albus smiled and interrupted, "Elixir of Life?"



## CHAPTER TWELVE

Harry saw class time was almost over. "I understand there has been some discussion," he began addressing his seventh years, "about intentionally getting detentions in my class in order to spend private time with the great, dreamy, extremely attractive Harry Potter."

"Don't forget to mention his endless pools of emerald eyes that a girl could happily drown in," a snarky Slytherin muttered.

"Five points to Slytherin for your cheek, Mr. Cooper."

A Ravenclaw girl wearing too much make-up raised her hand immediately.

"Yes, Miss Reynolds?"

"Did you just award points for cheek, Professor Potter?"

"Absolutely, Miss Reynolds," Harry said with a smile. "But don't worry. Today I won't be taking points for stating the obvious."

Christie Reynolds managed to blush and scowl.

"Now, as I was saying, I wish to dispel any rumors about what detention with me constitutes." Harry said as he looked over his class. "There will not be any candlelight dinners. There will not be any wacky adventures. There will not be anything fun or enjoyable if you are to be punished. Instead, you will just spend it in the broom closet."

A lot of confused and blank faces stared back at their latest DADA Professor.

"If you even like, I will allow you to bring a friend to detention with you. And what goes on in that broom closet is none of my concern. I am by no means encouraging any kissing and would no doubt get into trouble if there should be any, but I feel you should be forewarned before I subject you to a detention."

Harry explained, "It is a twist on a game I am sure most of you are familiar with entitled Seven Minutes in Heaven. Consider mine Seven Minutes in Detention."

"Seven minutes?" Bradley Cooper asked cheekily. "But what if that's not enough time, Professor Potter?"

Harry smiled. "Well, I assumed that would be plenty of time. But in case it's not, Mr. Cooper, you have just volunteered to test the effectiveness of this new policy." Harry waved his wand at an apparently blank portion of the wall and the disillusionment charm on a door dissolved. "This is the broom closet in question. Head on in there, Mr. Cooper, and I will alert you to when seven minutes have passed."

Bradley Cooper did not like the twinkle in his Professor's eye. "Can my girlfriend, Elise, come with?" he inquired with a nod towards a pretty seventh year Slytherin.

Harry shrugged. "It is only you, who has been given this detention, but, Miss Mathews, if you wish to join him, you are welcome to."

Elise Matthews saw the gleam in her Professor's eye that her head of house had warned all of Slytherin about. "Err, I think I'll pass this first time. Maybe later." She meekly said afraid to look at her boyfriend.

"Fine," Bradley grumbled and walked over to the broom closet. He opened the door. "Brr... a bit chilly in there, isn't it?"

Harry looked at his watch. "Seven minutes begins now. Thank you, Mr. Cooper." He turned away from the broom closet door, and looked at the rest of the class indicating Mr. Cooper was to begin. Bradley Cooper pulled his robes a little tighter around his body and closed the door behind him leaving him in the dark. A few muffled calls of "Lumos!" were heard and Harry explained to the class, "It is a detention, and so all magic will be suppressed in the broom closet. Now what can anyone tell me about dementors?"

Miss Reynolds raised her hand and was called on. Just as she opened her mouth to speak, a blood curdling scream erupted from inside the closet. The whole class gasped and whipped their heads towards the broom closet.

Harry tried to regain their attention. "You were saying Miss Reynolds?" Before she could reply, another more drawn out scream as well as "No! Oh god, no!" could be heard.

"Don't mind him," Harry assured the class. "He's probably just met Bob. Now, Miss Reynolds, dementors please?"

She looked a bit concerned at the sounds coming from the closet but she began, "The dementors are the guardians of the island prison of Azkaban. They feed off people's emotions and happiness. They're greatest weapon is the dementor's kiss, an action that sucks the soul from a living person, and-" There was loud fervent knocking on the door.

Harry waved off their worries. "He'll be fine. Please continue, Miss Reynolds."

"The only known defense is the patronus charm, and people suffering from the effects of dementors are soothed and healed with chocolate." She finished still snatching glances at the broom closet door.

"Anyone care to refute anything incorrect Miss Reynolds said? Or further to add?" Harry saw no one was paying him much attention. They were all looking fearfully at the broom closet. "Alright fine." Harry irritably said as he waved his wand and opened the broom closet.

Bradley Cooper scampered across the floor as fast as he could and clenched his arms around Harry's legs. He whimpered and cried and quietly pleaded, "I want my mummy," as he rocked back and forth. His woeful sniffles seemed to calm as he therapeutically sucked his thumb and held onto Professor Potter for dear life.

“Mr. Cooper, I’m disappointed. That was less than two minutes. I thought we were testing to see if seven was enough for you.”

Bradley Cooper just whined pitifully.

“Very well,” Harry said. “I guess perhaps I should have warned you that Bob was in the closet. He can be a bit overwhelming.”

Bradley Cooper shook his head and seemed to be wishing the bad stuff away.

“Okay, class,” Harry said ignoring the young man around his legs. “Miss Reynolds seems to think a patronus charm is the only way to fight dementors. This is not true. A patronus will drive them away, if it is sufficiently powerful. There are also magics that can contain them, though there isn’t any direct magic the majority of wizards and witches can cast onto them that will affect them.”

The class seemed to understand that Harry was saying he could do things to them, that none of them would be able to. Harry continued, “She also claims the dementor’s kiss is their greatest weapon. Why don’t we ask Bob if that’s true?” Harry said with an innocent smile. “Bob? Can you come out and answer a question?”

A cold chill swept across the classroom as several students immediately understood what was happening. Some were grabbing onto their desks for support, while a few students near each other began huddling together for warmth. An eerie mist began to spill out from the closet and the massive dementor glided out slowly.

A few students were moaning and quietly muttering to themselves.

Harry stood there with a smile, completely unaffected. “Thanks Bob.” Harry turned to see all the students in his class were feeling the effects of the dementor. “Now, Bob. Miss Reynolds says that the dementor’s kiss is a dementor’s greatest weapon. Is that true?”

The class was silent other than some teeth chattering.

The ancient raspy voice of Bob rattled out, "Nnnnnoooooooo." Bob turned and pointed a gnarled finger at Christie Reynolds. "Kissssssssss just forreplaaaayyyyyy."

Christie Reynolds let out a loud whimper and shivered in her seat.

"Foreplay, enh?" Harry asked conversationally. "So then what truly is a dementor's-" The end of class bell rang interrupting Harry's question. "Saved by the bell. For homework I would like to hear your theories on what a dementor's greatest weapon is. Just a foot or two. However long it takes you to explain it if you know or to just theorize. There is hardly any written information on the subject, so if you cannot determine the answer, make something up. Class is dismissed. Chocolate is at the door. Take however many bars you like."

The students near the back left as quick as they could, while others were helping fellow students out the door.

"Miss Matthews?" Harry called out. "Would you mind helping Mr. Cooper to his room? I will inform his other professors that he seemed a bit ill and needed a nap. And two points to Slytherin for your assistance on the detentions, Mr. Cooper. One for each minute you lasted." Harry frowned. "Rounding up." He shook his head disappointed in the Slytherin.

Once the classroom cleared out, Harry and Bob began chuckling at just the sight of each other. "I can't wait to hear some of their theories." Harry said.

Bob snickered. "Just pick the best one and we'll pretend that one is true."

A few days later, after having successfully tormented all of his fourth years and up, Harry said goodbye to Bob. Bob was going to have a chat with Albus and head on home. Presently, Harry was relaxing in the staff room reading a book. Tonks snuck up behind Harry, though it was doubtful Harry was not aware of her presence. She reached around his neck and was nibbling on his ear.

Hermione had seen this happen enough times that it barely fazed her.

“Hey Harry, I’ve got some detentions tonight and am going to have to cancel our dinner.” Tonks explained as she settled herself onto Harry’s lap. “Can I reschedule for Thursday?”

Harry shook his head. “Sorry. I’ve got plans Thursday. How about Saturday afternoon?”

Tonks looked a little surprised. “I thought Saturday’s were Ginny’s time?”

Harry nodded. “Usually, but she can’t this weekend, so we rescheduled for Sunday night.”

Tonks pouted. “So what’re you doing on Thursday?”

Harry smiled and shrugged. “Got a date.”

“With who?” Tonks asked dangerously.

Harry condescendingly patted Tonks on the top of the head. “Now, now Tonky. You know the rules. Don’t go getting territorial. If you want to go out with me, it can only be casually. I’ve been as open and honest about that as I can.”

“I know, I know.” Tonks tiredly agreed. She noticed Hermione watching them with an odd look. “I guess it’s just frustrating seeing Hermione getting to date Nicholas exclusively and it’s hard not to want that too.”

Harry smirked and raised an eyebrow. “So you got the hots for Nicholas now?”

Tonks smiled victoriously. “Maybe. Jealous?”

“Of Nicky?” Harry shook his head. “Nope, I can’t say that I am.”

Hermione just grumbled a quiet, “ungh...”

Tonks relaxed. “That wasn’t what I meant anyway and you know it.”

Minerva saw her opportunity, though she usually tried to ignore Tonks' improper public displays. "Nicholas and Hermione are seeing each other exclusively now? Hmm. I got the feeling he was just using her for mid-life crisis number 134. So that true, Hermione? Has the oldest fish in the sea been hooked now?"

Hermione couldn't believe how calm the transfiguration professor looked after saying something so... catty. "Umm," Hermione shrugged. "To be honest, the exclusivity of our relationship hasn't ever been a topic of discussion. For all I know he could be seeing other people."

Minerva got a gleam in her eye. "Yes, that would be a shame. Which reminds me, I have a letter my Uncle Tom, an old acquaintance of Nicholas', wanted me to pass along to Nicholas in person. Is he going to be coming for a visit or to pick you up anytime soon, Hermione?"

Hermione's hackles were up and she replied, "I could probably ask him to stop by tonight if it's something urgent, Minerva."

Minerva smirked at this child's attempts at intimidation. "That would be fantastic. Thank you, Hermione. Let me know when he's here, or just send him to my quarters."

Hermione nearly growled out loud at the audacity of this rival invading her territory.

Tonks was a bit surprised to see these usually stern prim professors were two steps from scratching each other with nails and pulling hair. And over a six hundred some odd year old man who Tonks hadn't ever really considered as an option.

Harry on the other hand was nearly laughing out loud. The tension and animosity that seemed to have sprung up between Hermione and Minerva was terribly entertaining to an outsider. He was blissfully clueless as to what was going and probably would not have found the situation so amusing if he were to realize his old Transfiguration Professor wanted to jump his decrepit alternate identity's bones. Harry briefly imagined a world where he actually told Minnie that "she

was too old for him” despite her belief that he was a good eight times as old as she was. Harry shuddered and knew that was not a world anyone would want to live in.

Harry’s train of thought and occasional involuntary shivers were interrupted by Tonks asking, “So, since we’re friends and know the rules, you can tell me. Who are you going out with on Thursday?”

Harry smiled at Tonks who was still nesting on Harry’s lap. “Why do you want to know so bad? Why is it important to you?”

“It just is!” Tonks pleaded.

Hermione butted in, “For what it’s worth he was talking on the floo to a Patil last night. Not sure which one though.”

Tonks looked like she had won a prize. “Ooooh. A Patil. Is that it, Harry? One of the Patil twins?”

Harry just nodded.

Hermione smirked. “So which one is it? The ditzzy airhead or the friendless nerd?”

Harry rolled his eyes. He saw Tonks and Hermione were truly expecting an answer, and everyone else was pretending to not be paying attention. Harry shrugged and quietly said, “Both.”

Hermione’s jaw dropped open. Harry liked to think it was because she was intrigued and amazed and not simply outraged. Sadly, Harry liking to think that did not make it true.

“You pig!” Hermione shrieked. “That is disgusting! And wrong in so many ways!”

Harry didn’t disagree. But there are some decisions that get deferred because, well, twins. Or rather, really hot twins as opposed to Weasley twins. Harry was pleased to see Tonks wasn’t anywhere near as outraged and angry as Hermione was. In fact, Tonks’ eyes were glazed over and she was staring off into space.



Hermione continued her rant, "And that's completely unfair to Tonks and Ginny!"

"No it's not!" Harry retorted. "If Tonks and Ginny wanted to both go out with me at the same time, I'd be more than happy to. I mean," Harry seemed to be thinking about the possibility. "I'd be a lot more than happy to." Harry noticed the glazed look on Tonks' face had disappeared and been replaced with a look of shock and quiet contemplation. "Thanks for the idea, Hermione. You've certainly given me something to think about."

Hermione huffed at the lost to the world response, both Harry and Tonks were sending out.

"I take it you are leaving us now?" the Headmaster inquired.

Bob nodded his shadow hooded head. "Yes Headmaster, but I figured I owed you a discussion before I left."

"Lovely," the Headmaster replied. "And please, call me Albus."

"Thank you, Albus." Bob said as he settled himself into a chair. "And a fair warning, if anyone approaches or comes by I'll have to let loose some of my friendly charm and revert back to the old Dummmmmbledorrre."

"Understood," Albus said with a smile. "I must concur in that I do not think many wizards are prepared for the idea of a civilized dementor."

Bob had turned his head and noticed Fawkes was sitting on her perch staring at Bob curiously. Albus was shocked to hear a telepathic call broadcast in his office. Both because he had no idea dementors were telepathic and because Bob seemed to be transmitting in the language of the phoenix, Phoenixia, a series of trills towards Fawkes.

Fawkes was as surprised as Albus and fell off her perch and into her tray, sitting there staring dumbfounded at Bob.

Bob actually giggled, which seemed unbecoming of a dementor. He sent out another amused telepathic call in Phoenixia. Fawkes actually jumped up completely startled and began undeniably laughing. Fawkes' whole body was shaking in mirthful chirps.

Albus didn't have the first clue what was going on.

Fawkes laughter was increasing and finally with a loud extended chirp, managed to squirt out an egg. It shot out of the tray and into the air. Bob reached out a hand and caught the still warm egg. Little bits of black lines seemed to be growing on the egg where Bob was holding it, and a small black smoke was hissing from the area. Bob set the egg safely on the tray below Fawkes perch.

Albus was beginning to think Bob was nearly as much a catalyst for ridiculous situations as Harry was. "Oh great Merlin." Albus mumbled. "Bob? I don't know where to start with you. Fawkes? You can lay eggs!"

Fawkes shook her head 'no', sat down on her egg, and tucked her head under her wing to take a nap.

Bob stage whispered to Albus, "I think she may be lying to you."

Albus stared at the silly bird who was making some loud fake snoring sounds. Albus shook his head and addressed Bob. "So how about you, Bob? Are you indicative of what most dementors are truly capable of? Telepathy? Speaking Phoenixia at least mentally? As well as far more powerful than perceived and patronus eating?"

Bob chuckled. "I'm a bit stronger than most dementors. Though we are all capable of telepathy. Not every dementor knows Phoenixia but a fair amount do. And, no, I doubt any other dementors could stand being around your patronus, let alone making illusions out of it. That's a sort of gift I received from Harry."

"Speaking of Harry," Albus segued. "How did you meet him? And how did he meet the real you?"

“Ahh yes. That’s a funny story.” Bob answered nervously. “The short version is I kissed him.”

Albus’ eyebrows rose. This was somewhat unexpected.

Bob continued. “The longer version is that myself and a few others were out searching for a beacon of sorts that was calling to us. We thought it was Harry, and the best way to find out seemed to be to give him the kiss.”

“And if Harry wasn’t the beacon...?” Albus inquired.

Bob weakly laughed. “We were really sure it was Harry. Really really. Like 99.99 percent sure. Well, okay at least 85 percent sure. Yeah, 85 is about right. If you’re rounding. Mm-yeah.”

Albus was beginning to think he may not have been paranoid in his protections of Harry. “So what happened when you kissed him?”

Bob relaxed. “Oh, his soul just fought it and stayed right where it was. When I gave up my efforts, he relaxed, called me an asshole, punched me in the mouth, and passed out.”

Albus chuckled.

“It was a bit disturbing for me,” Bob explained. “To weaken him initially I tried to suck all his happy memories away.” Bob shook his head. “Took less than a second. What’s usually painful and highly weakening was less effective than if I had pinched him. He hadn’t had too many good memories by then. I think he’s been making up for that lately.”

They continued to chat idly about dementors and their mutual friend Harry quite a bit. Albus learned dementors don’t have virgin daughters, nor have they ever been known to reproduce. They don’t need to eat human sustenance but can with no ill effects if they want. He learned that the kiss is just a weapon and way to permanently incapacitate an enemy. They were a relatively peaceful sort and that’s why they never killed. And they fed off errant emotions. If the entire world were Master Occlumens, the dementors may all starve to

death. A patronus was a magical source of emotion that served as a source of poisoned emotions to a dementor and that was why it drove them away. It would take a long exposure to a patronus to ever maybe kill a dementor, but that was why it was so easy for the dementor to simply flee from them.

“And that reminds me,” Albus stated. “I’ve been hearing that the dementor’s kiss is not your greatest weapon.”

Bob couldn’t stop a snort from escaping before he did his best to muffle his snickering. “I take no responsibility for what Harry is teaching his students.”

“So it is not true.”

Bob was still laughing and stood up. “I never said that. I’m sorry Albus but it really is time for me to go.” Bob was not making a very good effort to hide his amusement.

Albus frowned. “Please, Bob, just explain to me. What is a dementor’s filthy sanchez?”

“Good day, Albus.” Bob said as he composed himself after nearly choking when the Headmaster asked his last question. “We should have another chat like this sometime.”

“You’re welcome anytime, Bob. You’re really not going to tell me?” Albus pleaded.

“As your friend, Albus, I’m telling you don’t ask. Seriously, trust me, just don’t ask.”

And before Albus could say anything more, Bob seemed to dissolve into a mist and quickly sank into the floor, disappearing from the Headmaster’s office.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

“Who’s Sandy?” Hermione asked.

“Sandy?” Harry inquired with a raised eyebrow.

“I’d forgotten until just now.” Hermione explained. “At the start of term feast. You threatened Draco with telling the school something about Sandy. Who is she?”

“Ohhh.” Harry chuckled. “Her.” Harry considered and decided to keep this secret for a better time. “I’m afraid Draco would be extremely upset if I said anything about her.”

“Fine. Keep your secrets. Even though I couldn’t tell them if I wanted to.” Hermione reminded Harry. “Don’t forget Minnie wants Nicholas to drop by.”

“Oh yeah. I’m curious what her Uncle Tom wrote. I’m not remembering any noteworthy Tom’s from any of” Harry rolled his eyes and made obvious quote fingers, “my memories.”

“You think she has a letter to give you?”

Harry frowned. “That is what she said. Was she lying? And that’s why you and her seemed so stand-offish?”

Hermione was gobsmacked and just stared at Harry for a second. She snapped out of it and had a pleasant smile. “Oh that was nothing,” Hermione placated. “Now morph into a particularly sexy great grandpappy Nicky and go see what her Uncle Tom wrote to you.”

Harry was watching Hermione curiously. “Oh... kay.”

Nicholas, as he was now, walked out of Hermione’s staff quarters and down to Minerva’s. He knocked on her portrait. A low husky voice from inside said, “Come in.”

Nicholas stepped inside and said “Minerva? Are you okay? You sounded a little sickly there. Do you need to see Poppy?” Nicholas got no reply and the room appeared empty. As soon as he had completely cleared the entranceway the portrait guarding Minerva’s door slammed closed, and Nicholas noticed locking, silencing, and privacy charms were all immediately triggered. “Minerva? Are you in here?”

When Nicholas didn’t spot anyone hiding under invisibility, he asked again, “Minnie?”

A quiet meow alerted Nicholas to the animagus cat at his feet. She purred and rubbed up against his leg.

“Well aren’t you a pretty pussy.” Nicholas remarked and bent down to rub Minnie behind her right ear in that way that always makes her leg thump up and down. Minnie was being especially affectionate and seemed to be rubbing her feline body all over Nicholas’s legs and feet. It was hard not to notice when she let her back legs go limp and seemed to be trying to drag her bottom half across his shoes, marking him in her own way. “Uh oh, Minnie. Looks like someone fell off the catnip wagon again.”

Nicholas sat down cross-legged on the floor, and let Minnie crawl up into his lap while he continued to pet her. “Goodness you are being quite affectionate today, aren’t you?” Nicholas kept up his ministrations that only seemed to spur on Minnie’s fervent mewing sounds and deep purring. Nicholas smirked and said, “You know Minnie, if I didn’t know any better I’d say you were in heat.” He wagged his eyebrows in an attempt to tease her.

Minnie responded by purring deeper and extending her claws a bit.

Nicholas just smiled uncertainly and continued rubbing her head and back and extremely highly arched hind legs. After a few more minutes of stroking and rubbing the kitty, Nicholas spoke up. “As much as I am enjoying this Minnie, I think there was a reason you wanted me here other than to pet you.”

The kitty stepped back directly in front of Nicholas and with a quick pop, morphed back into the Hogwarts transfiguration professor. Her hair was down and it cascaded more than halfway down her back. She was wearing see-through blood red negligee, and she stood with her hands on her hips towering over the man seated on the floor whose head barely made it up to her waist. Her legs were straddled over his and with a hungry look in her eyes and a wicked smile, she said, "You just keep petting that pretty pu-"

"Oh my god!" Nicholas shrieked like a girl with his eyes affixed straight ahead at a sight he never thought he would see. Nicholas tried to scramble backwards but Minnie kept stalking right back up to him.

"Professor McGonagall!" Nicholas screamed. "What on earth are you doing?"

Minnie's evil smirk continued and she throatily responded. "That's right. I'm a professor. And it's time you got a refresher course on the advantages of an experienced woman."

Nicholas was scared and kept skittering away but Minnie kept cornering him. She continued, "I'm sure there's something fresh and new about a doe-eyed little child like Miss Granger, but you should not forget that women are like a fine wine. We get better with age," Minnie leaned down closer to the pale, scared Nicholas, "and also like a fine wine, we make you really horny too."

Nicholas let out a pitiful whimper and scrambled to his feet. "Minnie, please! I think you misunderstand me."

"Have I?" she asked with a growl. "Was I wrong? Did I assume too much? Do I deserve to be punished?" She finished in a husky whisper.

"Oh sweet Merlin," Nicholas gulped.

"I can be whatever you want me to be." Minnie continued to plead her case. "We can role-play. I'll be the basilisk, you be Potter." Minnie

dropped to her knees, shut her eyes, and opened her mouth wide. "Come on! Stick your sword in my mouth!"

"Oh heaven help me," Nicholas prayed.

"Careful I don't open my eyes or you'll go rock hard, my little Gryffie!"

"I gotta go," Nicholas yelled, taking advantage of her closed eyes. He waved his hand and brought down all the charms on the door and started running down the hallway. Nicholas spotted his salvation. "Professor Snape! Just a second!"

Minerva saw her prey escape and when she spotted Severus she quickly shut her door before she was noticed by the Potions professor.

"Severus. Oh lord, am I glad to see you."

"Nicholas." Severus said and inclined his head in a nod. "What can I do for you?"

Nicholas smiled. "You can pretend to carry on a conversation in case Minerva tries to hex me."

Severus made a friendly smirk. "Are you sure hex is the right word?"

Nicholas frowned and was about to reply when he sensed a spell headed right towards his unprotected back. A magical ring appeared and swallowed up the spell before it ever reached Nicholas. Nicholas looked over his shoulder and said, "Nice try, Minnie. I'll send you an owl later about what we discussed." Nicholas looked back at Severus. "Yes I think 'hex' was pretty accurate."

Severus nodded. "Certainly appears that way. Tell me, Nicholas, have you seen Potter around anywhere?" A small spasm and Severus growled and corrected himself. "Harry. Have you seen Harry? He wasn't in his office nor with Miss Granger or Miss Tonks."

Nicholas paused and replied. "Err, I think he may have been working on our project. I was heading back to the lab anyway. I'll send him to your quarters when I see him?"



“My classroom, please.” Severus corrected. “Draco is doing some grading and he has a habit of taking off points if they put ‘Gryffindor’ down as their house.”

Nicholas was a bit shocked. “And you’re correcting him?”

Severus smiled. “Of course. He never takes enough points off for an answer that incorrect.”

Nicholas shook his head with a mirthful smile. “Good day, Severus. I’ll send Harry to your classroom.” Nicholas made a show of pulling out a rubber duck, casting portus, and then disappearing with a pop.

Severus’ curiosity was definitely piqued at the intentionally obvious show of portkey usage. He was thinking deeply on the walk to his classroom in the dungeons. Nicholas had mentioned Harry was off in some lab, but still managed to send the jolt through his phoenix mark when he called him Potter rather than Harry just now. Severus arrived in his classroom to see Draco was rubbing the top of his head furiously.

Harry was there and said, “Stop squirming you big baby! It’s just an itching curse. I didn’t know what Minnie threw at my back and I just deflected it. I didn’t know you’d be in here.”

Draco whined like a baby and kept scratching his scalp. He finally calmed down once Harry had managed to get the counter-curse to work on the impertinent blond ponce.

Harry turned and saw Severus standing in the door to the classroom. He was just staring in shock at Harry with his mouth open. Severus had obviously just realized something and he said loudly and angrily, “YOU!”

Harry groaned and realized his mistake. “Aww crap.”

Severus was confused and flabbergasted. “You! You’re... You’re...” And whatever he was going to say was drowned out by Severus falling to the floor in agonizing pleasure. Harry quickly summoned

Snape all the way into the room and put up some especially strong privacy wards.

Severus struggled to his feet, the look of dawning horror still evident on his face. Draco was just watching them curiously. Severus stated, "So you're..."

"Yes." Harry agreed.

"And even back..."

"Yes." Harry concurred.

"And that's how you..."

"Yes." Harry nodded.

"So all that time..."

"Yup." Harry said.

"But, but..."

"I know." Harry answered.

"That's insane!"

"Isn't it?" Harry smiled.

Draco was getting fed up. "Will you stop talking through your secret decoder ring!"

Harry and Severus ignored Draco.

"Are you going to obliviate me?"

Harry sighed. "That was my first impulse."

"I wish you wouldn't."

Harry considered. "I'm inclined not to at the moment."

"And Draco?"

Harry looked at Draco. "I'd be more likely to obliviate him, but I'm not sure it would be fair to tell just one of you."

Draco paled and still had no idea what was going on.

Snape realized something else. "So the project..."

"Mmm-hmm." Harry agreed.

"Hold on! What about when..."

"Not sixth but seventh." Harry explained.

"Oh good gravy."

Draco noticed they've seemed to be a lull in their discourse. "Umm, would someone care to clue me in? Preferably without a memory charm."

Severus looked at Harry hopefully and even tried stretched his mouth in an odd effort to smile.

Harry chuckled. "Oh stop that face. And fine, I won't obliviate either of you, but I will have to put you under a knowledge suppression hex. Your little former dark marks do not ensure enough loyalty, as I'm sure Riddle would agree."

Severus and Draco shrugged and accepted that.

Harry cast the spell and the large purple bubble expanded around them all and then slurped back into Harry.

"Alright, Severus. Clue in Draco, if you please."

Severus smirked and sneered. He sure loved figuring something out and then keeping that information to himself. "Our venerable Master,

the Light Lord Potter here, has been impersonating Nicholas Flamel for a while.”

Draco snapped his head to Harry, looking for confirmation. Harry nodded. “Actually not impersonating. I am Nicholas Flamel.”

Severus’ eyes widened. “What! What happened to Harry?”

Harry shrugged. “I’m him too.”

Severus looked at Draco and could tell neither felt too comfortable with the ridiculously powerful schizophrenic in front of them. “Please explain.”

Harry smirked. “Well I suppose the story starts with the brilliant muggleborn wizard, Markus James.”

Severus frowned. “James? Never heard of him.”

Harry smiled. “I wouldn’t expect you to. He died relatively unknown in the late fifteenth century.”

Draco and Severus again traded a worried look wondering how many personalities their Master had.

Harry rolled his eyes at the worry he could read on their faces. “He was extremely gifted, but was denied the ability to study alchemy, due to his lack of pure blood. So he made up an alternate identity from a pureblood line that most thought had died out. Called himself Nicholas Flamel. And from there you can guess, he became highly regarded as a warrior and an alchemist. People looked up to him to solve problems and fight against evil uprisings. Eventually the legend and mystique he carried was a bit more than he could handle as he aged.”

Draco and Severus were both intrigued by this story and were listening attentively.

“So he decided to find the brightest and strongest and most honorable wizard, and pass on the legend. Before he did though, he

created the Philosopher's Stone. Claimed it was the pinnacle of alchemy and with it came immortality. Of course this was a complete fabrication, but it allowed there to be a powerful light wizard, who could always intimidate from simply his reputation and his immortality. This continued throughout the years, as the many Nicholas Flamel's grew older, they then had to train and find the wizarding world's next hero to carry the banner of Nicholas Flamel. In my sixth year, a great man named Wesley let me in on this secret and trained me to take his place as the current Nicholas Flamel. And as I told Severus, by seventh year I was Nicholas Flamel and taught myself DADA."

"Damn Potter, you gave me detentions!" Draco exclaimed.

Harry rolled his eyes. "And you deserved them."

"I was giving you private lessons!" Severus exclaimed. "And you were a student and a teacher and had a lot of other lessons. No wonder you've gone crazy."

"Oi! Careful now. I can change my mind on that obliviation real quick."

Draco smiled weakly. "That's uh... that's quite alright. I'll be good."

"So who else knows?" Severus asked.

Harry frowned. "Just Albus and Hermione. And now you two knuckleheads. And don't even try and spread it to others. The whole point of Nicholas Flamel is ruined if the secret gets out."

"Oh my god," Severus shouted. "Minnie's trying to get in your pants!" Severus proclaimed and fell into laughter.

Harry sighed and dropped his head on the table.

Draco just looked at Harry and started cracking up too.

"I have a feeling I have Albus to thank for that." Harry grumbled.

Severus was shaking his head. "I used to have so much respect for Flamel."

Harry huffed. "Oh geez. A little unfairly prejudiced? I'm still me."

"Yes, well..." Severus shrugged and dismissed him.

Harry growled, "And I can still kick your ass."

Severus frowned a bit meekly. "Well, duh."

"Anyways," Harry added. "What did you want to see me for, Severus?"

Severus looked at Harry and just stared blankly for several seconds. He seemed to be thinking heavily and finally said, "I cannot even begin to remember. I'm still running over things I told Nicholas Flamel that I'd never want to let a Potter know."

Harry mumbled, "And I thought I was immature." He continued in a louder voice. "Anyways, get back to me if you remember. And the knowledge suppression will allow you to talk to Albus and Hermione about Nicholas, if you're secure. I get the feeling you're going to have some questions once you guys snap out of your daze." Harry stuck out his tongue at Draco and Severus. "I'll see you guys later." And with a pop, Harry disappeared from the dungeon.

When Harry reappeared in his office, he spotted his first gift and loyal friend.

"Hey Hedwig. How're you doing, girl?"

Hedwig chirped a happy reply and held out her leg where a letter was attached.

"Oh?" Harry inquired. "You knew someone who would want to get a hold of me?"

Hedwig puffed herself up and chirped affirmative.

"You're too clever for your own good, you know that."

Hedwig nodded and shook her foot with the letter again.

Harry dug out some owl treats for her and opened his letter.

Dear Mr. Potter,

I don't know what you did or how you did it. I would love to find out exactly what and how but realize some of your secrets must remain just that: secrets. And it should not surprise you to find Simon is completely tight-lipped on any of the inquiries we've made. But as you suggested, our resident kitten is making great strides and improvements. His magical muscles have exceeded those of even incoming first years at Hogwarts and he very well may be completely cured within a month.

This is a wonderful blessing, but does carry some repercussions. As a ward of the Ministry and St. Mungo's, a clean bill of health will include Simon having to leave the place he has called home for most of his life. Without any family to take him in and care for him, it is unclear where he would be going. As such, I felt you needed to be aware of his situation in hopes you might be able to suggest a proper home. I'm not entirely sure your life would be conducive to providing him a proper environment to grow and develop in, nor whether you would want to. But I know your opinion means the world to Simon, and you might have ideas on options other than the default of a muggle orphanage.

My office and confidentiality will always be open to you. I hope to hear from you soon, or if I need to contact you again, I hope this lovely owl of yours shows up again.

Santos L. Halper  
Head Healer,  
Long-term Pediatric Care Ward,  
St. Mungo's

Harry put the letter down with a genuine smile. This was great news. And it might even help Harry solve another of his problems. He just needed to figure out the best way to handle this.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Dear Diary,

Today I found out Harry Potter is nnnnnnggghh. Whuuugggghhrrreee.

Today I found out Harry Potter blligggiiigggiiddddyyyy.

Today rhagghhuunnnhhaarrrrrbbeeeettteerrr.

Dear Diary,

I hate Harry Potter. And I hate secrecy spells too. But worse than secrecy spells is Harry Potter. I can't stop thinking about how much I hate him. I find myself writing limericks about how annoying he is. And how he gets everything he wants. But he's too stupid and noble to take the things he could. He's nowhere near as pretty as me. Even Amanda Playwith, my magical mirror, agrees with me.

I got hit in the head with an errant itching curse. If Harry hadn't shown up, I probably would have suffered serious coiffure damage. I wish I knew enough about wards so that I could properly protect my hair. Any more instances like today's and I'll just swallow my pride and ask Harry to cast some ridiculous ancient protection on it. It was another non-potion day in my apprenticeship studies. Severus and me spent two hours where I had to hold down a sneer, while he tried to distract me. Honestly, I've mastered this since I was ten, but Severus insists I need more practice.

I really should have thanked Dad for teaching me how to make a magical diary. I love you, Diary.

Hugs and kisses,  
Draco

The writing on the book swirled and disappeared. It kept blank for several seconds until slowly the familiar scrawl that Draco recognized as his own, faded into view.

Dear Draco,

Wow, Harry Potter. I really had no idea you would write about him. Again. I swear, Draco, we must be gay. All we do is think about Harry, talk about Harry, complain about Harry, and drink Harry Potter



polyjuice and touch ourselves. But at least we agree that we are prettier than Harry will ever be.

Anywho-hah, you know I'm just giving us a hard time. We're gorgeous, we're rich, we have great hair, we're powerful, mom told us it was a good size, we're intelligent, and everyone else in the world wishes they were us. Now let's quit the pity party and get to work on thinking up witty things to say. It wins us support and makes others look bad. 'Ferret Potter' certainly fell well below expectations but that's no reason to quit.

Yes, yes, Dad was wonderful for teaching us how to make a magical diary. Oh that reminds me, that itchy painful feeling inside of you? That's nothing to worry about. We figured that we would have an allergic reaction in Hogwarts due to the close proximity to mudbloods, so this isn't unexpected. Lost time and not being sure how you got somewhere are also perfectly normal. And remember, never trust anyone but me. Ever.

Love hearing from you, hot stuff.

Hugs and kisses,  
Diary

Draco closed his diary thinking the darn thing seemed to have a mind of its own. But there was no denying it is as brilliant as Draco is beautiful. It was spot on with that feeling of itchy pressure inside his body. It felt like Draco was losing himself inside of himself. Maybe now Severus would believe him about his allergies.

Harry was sitting across from Padma and Parvati Patil doing his best to focus on his menu long enough to figure out something to order. Every time he looked at the menu, he'd go cross-eyed and the words were just blurred. But when he looked at his dates, his vision was better than dragonsight. Every once in a while he'd look up and smile, just to double check that he wasn't imagining this. Padma and Parvati were both wearing their Hogwarts uniforms. Not the silly hat, nor the massive cloak and solid black robe. But that tie that hung and drew your eyes straight towards a girl's chest, and those pleated skirts. And, Merlin be blessed, because Harry was guessing these were about their fourth year's uniforms, when the bodies that filled them

out were a bit smaller and the clothes were a bit looser. Harry was mildly impressed they were able to breathe normally at the moment. Harry certainly was struggling to breathe normally. He looked back at his menu and still just saw blurred words and pictures.

Harry thought he'd try a different tactic. "So ladies, any idea what you're going to order?"

Padma smiled at Parvati and asked, "You're not looking to fall in love or anything, right Harry?"

Harry smiled and shook his head. "No more than I'm looking to catch a bludger in the crotch."

Parvati interjected in a business-like tone. "Perfect, because if you want to ditch this stuffy restaurant and just go to the grocer, we can buy all your favorite foods, rub it all over our naked bodies, and you can just eat off of us?"

Harry slowly put down his menu, watching the Patil twins.

Padma let out a quiet moan at her sister's proposition and just growled while staring into Harry's eyes.

It took all of eleven seconds for Harry to grab the two Patils by the hand, pop over to a grocery store, grab some strawberries, honey, whipped cream, peanut butter, pudding, and chocolate syrup, and then pop back to one of his apartments.

The next morning, Harry's internal alarm clock went off at about six AM. Waking up to phoenix song may cleanse one's soul, but waking up in a Patil sandwich helps to straighten out one's priorities. Due to the absence of a normal morning reaction, Harry had to check the bait and tackle under the hood and sure enough, he too was an identical Patil twin. Harry quietly sighed to himself, wondering why even among incredibly rare gifts like metamorphmagi he had to be completely abnormal. Historically metamorphmagi will often lose their form shifts in the relaxation of deep sleep. With a small effort a metamorphmagus can maintain transformations, but it's usually not worth the extra drain, and unless it is consciously kept up, the natural

form reasserts itself. But not Harry. Oh heavens, nothing would be that simple for Harry. Every once in a while Harry would wake up in a completely different form than he went to sleep with. He nearly gave Tonks a heart attack the first time she woke up next to Voldemort. Apparently Harry had one of his old nightmares, though Tonks thought it was just Harry's subconscious playing yet another prank on her. Hermione woke up next to Professor Snape one time, so utterly horrified she blacked out just moments after waking. Harry convinced her it must have been a bad dream, but knew to keep an eye on her for an addiction to dreamless sleep potion.

As the events of the previous evening came back to Harry, he realized that this Patil twin form actually was the same form he went to sleep in. Harry couldn't help but smile and eat some of the dried chocolate syrup mustache off his upper lip for breakfast. Harry got dressed, conjured up a couple dozen unnaturally green and black roses, and signed a short card: Let me know if you want a copy of the tape.

Today was Friday. Harry had a good feeling that it was going to be a nice day.

It had been a little while since he dropped in on his puffers, so Harry made his way into the common room. "Good morning, my little puffers!" Harry bellowed out.

"Professor Potter!" Ryan Adams greeted. "You're in a good mood this morning."

Harry sighed and smiled. "I'm still glowing from sex with twins."

"What!" an enraged Rose Zeller said.

Harry paused just a half moment and innocently 'repeated', "I'm still going on my second wind."

"At seven in the morning?" Rose asked disbelievingly.

Harry nodded resolutely, "Busy morning."

Evan Morgan spoke up, "Actually, Professor Potter perhaps you can help us in our discussion."

Harry nodded and indicated for Evan to continue.

"Ryan, as you know, had to regrow the bones in his wrist the day before and he said that Skele-Gro potion was far and away the grossest thing he'd ever had to drink."

Harry nodded, "Yeah it's pretty awful. I've had it more times than I care to remember."

Evan continued, "I'm sure it's bad, but we've been trying to determine what really would be the grossest thing we could think of to consume."

"Ahh. Be careful," Harry warned. "No matter what you can come up with, there will always be something grosser out there. Or a way to make something worse. But let's hear what you've come up with and I'll see if I can add anything fun to your list."

"So far the leading candidates are," Rose Zeller began. "An equal parts mixture of milk, orange juice, and vinegar. I've a muggle friend who claims it's a hangover cure but pretty wretched to drink. Another suggestion was the collected liquid run-off from Professor Snape's unwashed pillowcase. Love stains optional."

Harry grimaced. "I see you guys have put some thought into this."

Rose continued. "Evan is still trying to make his case for Diet Coke, but if some muggles like it, it's hard to imagine it is as bad as he claims. And the last one we've been considering is a four cheese and chocolate shake."

"With hot fudge!" Linda Miller added with a smile.

"Cornelius Fudge?" Harry asked.

Evan blanched. "Oh dear, that is worse already."

Harry looked at them. He slipped into his calm and cool professor type posturing. "Those are some respectable suggestions, but you can always add in extra flavors you know. For example, when you use milk, you can always become more specific. Say instead of just milk, you can spice it up and mention that it is milk that was hand-pumped from one of Voldemort's extra nipples. Maybe even from before his rebirth when he was just a mutated freak baby."

A few of the Hufflepuffs got scared and began to step away from their Head of House.

Harry ignored them and went on lecturing. "If you want to stick to standard food items, you can mix them up in different ways. Maybe something like rotten eggs and onions boiled in Dr. Pepper and topped with frozen dog food gravy."

Rose and Evan caught each other's eyes and realized they were all amateurs at this game compared to their DADA professor.

"If you branch out into the magical world, there's a cornucopia of smells and tastes you can't find anywhere else." Harry explained. "One of my personal favorites is a vampire drink. It's a finely blended fetus and peaches smoothie." Harry chuckled. "They call it a Fuzzy Natal."

"Or if you have ever seen a Giant spear a prairie dog on a sharp stick and while the rodent's still twitching in the throes of its death, the Giant spins it in his ear to clear out his ear canal and collect the waxy build-up. Right there are several potential spices and seasonings for an unappetizing meal in both the prairie dog and the thick, creamy wax."

When no one seemed able to stop Harry, he just kept on going.

"There is an acromantula silk-spinning by-product that loosely translates to 'hot wet sick'. Rumor has it that it's even poisonous to immortals, though of course not fatal. Just for the visual of a naturally occurring chunky neon green, that's a powerful image."

A few of the younger students began to sniffle.

Harry smiled. "The same vampire who taught me about Fuzzy Natsals used to go on about how she loved to eat lumpy mashed potatoes smothered in werewolf menstruation."

"Werewolf what?" a confused Linda Miller asked.

Harry smiled and said, "Ahh yes, werewolf menstruation. Every once in a while, there's a female werewolf, who will have her monthly friend Flo dropping by at the same time as the moon is full. The cycles aren't quite exact though, so it varies a bit back and forth. The stuff, if collected properly, is great for sex magic and from the sound of it, also great for complimenting the flavor of tater tots. Now if you go so far as to include fecal-"

"Professor!" Evan yelled. "Please! You're scaring the first years."

Harry just now noticed most of the first years had sad frowns on their faces and tears running down to their chin. "Oops, sorry. Guess I got a little carried away there."

Harry concentrated for a second and then let loose a wave of magic. The massive cheering charm had the desired effect, and the first years were smiling again. "Anyways, I'll stop now but just reiterate like I said, there's always something worse or a way to make what you're imagining even more nauseating. Alright then, off to breakfast." Harry smiled and nodded and left the common room.

There was a distinctly smaller number of Hufflepuffs eating breakfast today than usual.

Tonks was really hoping there would be a better turn-out at least from Harry's own house for this. She'd gotten help from the only person she thought could help her get one over on Harry: Nicholas Flamel. Nicholas seemed almost as excited as Tonks was at the opportunity to try and prank Harry. Nicholas warned Tonks not to count her chickens before they hatched as Harry was known for sneaking his way out of pranks when least expected.

Tonks didn't know how, but Nicholas even convinced Dobby to help them. Over the night she had managed to make her way into Harry's

quarters and into the super secret drawer Nicholas told her about. She got the mega-concentrated dungbomb trained to follow a person around for a preset amount of time. She'd never heard of one of these, but Nicholas said he and Harry had developed them. Nicholas didn't have any but he knew where Harry kept his. And with Dobby's assistance Tonks was able to make her way through Harry's wards and reach this powerful magical prank item.

It was significantly larger than Tonks would have guessed. It was the size of a bowling ball, and had a three second fuse on it, which Tonks immediately clipped down to less than a second. Tonks morphed into her previously agreed upon form of Professor Flamel. She was carrying the massive dungbomb behind her back as she walked up to Harry.

"Nicholas!" Harry exclaimed with a raised eyebrow. "I didn't expect to see you today."

Tonks, in the guise of Nicholas, smirked and pulled out the gift from behind her back. "Just dropping off a present for you, Harry."

Harry's eyes went wide and he quickly yelled "Where did you get that?"

Tonks didn't even give Harry a moment before tapping her wand to the fuse and tossing it right to Harry. Harry quickly flipped his hand upward and a levitation charm shot the massive bomb straight up into the air. It crashed through the enchanted ceiling of the Great Hall and was still rising rapidly when it exploded in a massive white light. A deafening crack of thunder shook the entire school and little sparks of magic seemed to be raining from the sky.

Tonks was mildly surprised to see her imitation of Nicholas Flamel's form seemed to dissolve right in front of her, as more than a few kids looked around wondering what had just happened. Tonks winced and saw the worried look on Harry's face. "Umm... oops?"

And so began the first day in Hogwarts history where no one could do any magic. Well, almost no one.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

“Professor Potter?” the Headmaster asked.

Harry inwardly was cheering at the massive success. “Yes, Headmaster?”

“Did you by chance just kill Hogwarts?”

Harry blanched. “Oh crap, oh crap. I didn’t even think of that.”

Albus took a step back. He whispered out, “You did kill...?”

Harry shook his head. “No no. She should be fine, but she is going to be so pissed at me. Oh lordy.” Harry began frantically scrambling through his pockets for something before locating a potion and drinking it. His body began to glow and magic was emanating from him in waves. “Oh that’s better. Now, let’s get some answers here.” Harry called out, “Apprentice Dobby!”

Nothing seemed to happen, though more than a few students seemed to whipping their wands trying to cast any sort of spell they could. None were working.

It took about ten more seconds of silence before an exhausted and panting smartly dressed house elf came sprinting into the hall. “Master...” he gasped out between breaths. “Sorry...” he panted, “took...” he huffed, “so long,” he finished.

Harry was laughing at Dobby’s inability to pop to him. “Settle down and catch your breath, Dobby.”

Dobby nodded and was leaning forward with his hands on his knees.

“Why are you so tired? I thought house elves had a nearly unlimited supply of energy.”

Dobby caught his breath and replied. “Not unlimited, but a lot. Dobby was in his room, when he felt connection to Master disappear. Then it



came back, then you called. Dobby popped as far as the magic would take me. Then Dobby had to run through Hogsmeade and grounds to get here.”

Harry’s eyes went wide. “You sprinted through Hogsmeade and across the grounds in less than fifteen seconds? Good gracious Dobby.”

Dobby nodded and asked, “You called for Dobby?”

Harry shook his head banishing the picture of a house-elf chasing down a cheetah from his mind. “Right, yes. You wouldn’t happen to know how Miss Tonks could have possibly broken through some of my protection enchantments and wards on a certain drawer, would you?”

Dobby meekly dropped his head. “Dobby might happen to know.”

“Dobby,” Harry said warningly.

“Dobby decided to help out old Nicky.”

“Why would you do that? You know how dangerous some of the stuff in there is.”

Dobby looked up and shrugged. “Because it’s funny.” Dobby made a cheeky smile and winked.

Harry lost his stern tone and started chuckling back. “Good point, Apprentice.”

“Harry!” the Headmaster scolded in a surprising impression of Molly Weasley.

Harry shrugged showing just how apologetic he felt. “I’m sure Nicholas is aware what’s happened and is hopefully on his way.”

Albus inquired, “I don’t suppose you have any more of that potion you took, do you?”

Harry smiled. "I've got quite a bit of it in fact, but it won't do you much good. It's made specifically for a singular person's magical signature. And I think only Nicky and I have ever made it or have it."

"And how long does it take to brew?"

Harry winced. "Just under a week."

Albus sighed. "Oh dear."

Harry explained. "Don't worry though. That particular bomb's nullification field should only last for 48 hours."

"Two days!" Hermione shrieked.

Tonks seemed to be slinking away as quietly as she could.

Harry nodded. "Yup, and just what on earth were you thinking doing that, Miss Tonks?"

Tonks quickly drew the attention of everyone in the hall. "Eeep. I didn't know that would happen, I swear!"

Harry raised an eyebrow. "So you thought you would just throw a different bomb in my face?"

Tonks realized it didn't look too good for her. "It was supposed to be a dungbomb!"

Harry continued, "And have you ever seen a dungbomb that size?"

"I don't know what it looks like." Tonks explained. "Nicholas said it was a new super dungbomb you'd developed that actually followed a person around and resisted being dispelled."

Severus stood up angrily pointing at the Defense professor. "I knew that was you, you cheeky brat!"

Harry laughed, "Actually no, that one was Nicholas."

Severus' face purpled a bit and he exclaimed, "Nnnghaaa!"

Hermione threw her arms into the air in triumph, "I'm not alone!"

All of sudden Albus, Severus, Hermione, and even Draco realized that this entire episode and upcoming 48 hours was an intentional machination of the Defense professor. There were many muffled grunting sounds and angry faces.

Albus stood up and addressed the students still wondering what was going on. "Attention students. Classes today are canceled due to an inability to do anything magical. It appears we can all try living as muggles for the next two days. Any emergencies, problems, or complaints, please bring them to your DADA professor," Albus explained with a smile. "As he is the only one capable of magic, and nnnnghh." Apparently Albus couldn't point out he was to blame for this as he frustratingly discovered.

Nicholas burst through the door with a couple of Unspeakables trailing behind him. "Albus, sweetie, 'nnnnghh' is even barmier than 'nitwit, blubber, oddment, tweak'." Nicholas shook his head. "It's unbecoming of a Headmaster."

Albus replied with an angry, "rrubbluhh."

Harry asked, "Did you take your potion?"

Nicholas nodded. "As soon as I reached a non-magical Hogsmeade. It appears that you've managed to nullify the magic all around within a good two mile radius."

"Hey now!" Harry said. "Don't you blame this on me. You're the one who had to have helped Miss Tonks get through those protections."

Nicholas raised an eyebrow. "I told her how to find a special dungbomb."

Tonks defended herself. "I didn't know what it looked like. It was right where you said they would be!"

Nicholas agreed. "No one blames you, Tonky. If anyone, it's the cheeky Defense professor's fault."

"No way!" Harry yelled. "This is your fault, old man. You didn't even know what dangerous things I might have put in there."

"You shouldn't even have dangerous things in a school!"

"I can't leave them lying around where someone as stupid as you could stumble across them. I need to keep an eye on them!"

"I'll give you stupid you rotten-"

Tonks jumped in between the childish bickering. "Stop! Both of you. It was an accident. Neither of you intended this to happen."

Tonks was briefly interrupted by Albus, Severus, Hermione and Draco mumbling, "Muhmuhmuhammm."

Tonks continued. "But we could sure use two working wizards around here."

Harry and Nicholas seemed to growl at each other and nodded. Harry asked, "Did you bring any prototypes?"

Nicholas nodded. "I brought one of the more powerful rings, and half a dozen slightly buggy wands. And I picked these guys up so they would let you borrow a power stone." Nicholas said pointing over his shoulder at the so far speechless Unspeakables.

"Oh good. So you're going to jolt her awake?" Harry asked.

Nicholas smiled and shook his head. "Oh heavens, no. That gets to be your job. You're the young rascal with more power than brains. I'm getting soft in my old age."

Harry rolled his eyes. "She ever going to forgive us?"

Nicholas smiled. "I think so. You take these two, you know where, and see if you can't kickstart her heart. The portraits and staircases

need to be working so people can even get around. Come to think of it, there's probably some scared kids trapped in their common rooms and other areas. Even the ghosts seem to have disappeared. No sign of Minnie either." Nicholas finished with a smile and showed his fingers crossed for luck.

Harry nodded, "Alright. I think Professor Granger would be the best test subject for the ring." Harry said with a mischievous smile. "Something tells me she wouldn't refuse a ring you give her."

Hermione dropped her head in an effort to hide her blush. Nicholas smiled and shook his head. "Get to work, lazy bones."

Harry and the two still oddly silent Unspeakables left the Great Hall. Harry led them through a maze of odd corridors and passages before ending up in front of an unmarked wall. "Unspeakables really don't speak?" Harry asked.

One of them opened his mouth and apparently nothing was coming out. He shook his head resigned. Harry saw their struggles and opened up his legilimency senses and picked up some of their thoughts. "Ahh, I see. Don't worry, I won't search for or share any secrets I stumble across. I just picked up some of your errant thoughts and realized you have a spell on you that allows you to speak only certain things. Apparently the nullification field prevents the spell from allowing you to speak even dormantly. Nice spell. The field seems to stop some of your active defenses of the mind too. Never thought about the usefulness of the potion for interrogations with masters of occlumency. Anyways, stand back."

The two Unspeakables looked a bit unhappy about this but stepped back just as Harry cast a blasting curse that tore massive hole in the wall. Inside was a room, the Unspeakables had never heard of nor seen. The stone was polished and clean and there were runes around all the walls, floor, and ceiling.

Harry explained, "This is the sort of heart of Hogwarts. Her brain, or magical core or whatever you want to call it. I need to try and link the power stone to her and then I'm going to have to just fill her as full as I can."

The Unspeakables nodded understanding though were holding back chuckles at Harry's choice of words.

"I'm probably going to pass out," Harry explained and saw the Unspeakables snickering openly now. "She's going to take a bit more juice than just a tickling charm even with the power stone magnification. Please try to keep her from killing me, if I do manage to wake her up."

The Unspeakables were shaking with repressed laughter. They traded a look and smiled at Harry.

Harry grumbled about mute pervert sadists, and set the stone down in the center of a ring of blood red glowing runes. "Err, you might want to step back a bit." Harry suggested. "Actually come to think of it, you may want to shield your eyes or look the other way too."

The two Unspeakables looked at each other and in unison both pulled out a pair of sunglasses and put them on.

Harry was reminded of secret agents and chuckled a bit. He took a salve out of a pocket in his robes and covered his hands in it. He then placed both hands on the power stone and began chanting a long ancient druidic incantation. His entire body was glowing in power and it was clearly being fed into the stone. Cracks of light began spreading out through the stone, like a spider web growing across the floor. By the time enough of the magic reached the ring of runes, it was like a floodlight just flared to life and a pillar of energy shot skyward from the ring of runes, encompassing Harry. The magic in Hogwarts flared to life and spread throughout the castle.

Harry fell backward after significantly over-exerting himself. He quietly began mumbling, "Listen, sweetie, I'm sorry. It was an accident, I mean... please don't kill me."

The Unspeakables, whose eyes were still stinging even with the protection of muggle sunglasses, stepped forward to grab Harry when the ground around the young man seemed to ripple into liquid that

Harry sunk right into, as he fell away into unconsciousness. Just as he disappeared, the floor returned back to its normal stone solidity.

The Unspeakables shared a brief look with each other, shrugged, picked up their power stone, and walked back to the Great Hall.

When they entered the Great Hall, they noticed there were a lot more students in there now, apparently having successfully fled their common rooms. Hermione saw the Unspeakables enter without Harry and asked, "So did she kill him?"

The Unspeakables looked at each other and shrugged. One of them was shaking his outstretched hand right to left as if to say, "Sort of."

Nicholas rolled his eyes. "No she didn't kill him. I'm talking to her right now."

Albus frowned. "You? I'm the Headmaster. Why hasn't she sent me anything?"

Nicholas looked at the Headmaster waiting to see if he would realize the silliness of that question. Finally he answered, "Perhaps because you're not magical at the moment, Albus."

Albus looked sheepish. "Oh. Right."

Nicholas stood there, with a glazed over eyes staring into space. After less than a minute he announced, "Alright people. Hogwarts is up and running. Portraits and staircases and such will work as normal. She's a bit peeved at Professor Potter and is, well," Nicholas paused and decided on, "well she's spanking him for being bad. He's pled his case to her and I think they're settling on his punishment. He'll be back and healthy shortly, but in the meantime it might be nice having a couple days to see how well you all can get along without magic."

Nicholas then took a few wands and considered his colleagues. He gave Hermione a small gold ring, while she blushed and looked down. He showed her how to slide it down her wand and position it securely. This visual example just made Hermione blush even more for some reason. Nicholas then handed out wands to Severus, Draco, Albus,

Neville, and Tonks. "You all can fight over these prototypes if you want or redistribute them as you see fit. I'll save one more in case Minerva decides to grace us with her presence."

The staff members were all inspecting these incredibly plain thin brown sticks that had no handle or markings of any sort.

Nicholas began, "Now before you do anything stupid-"

Apparently, irony knew its cue quite well, as Draco had decided to vigorously shake his thin brown stick up and down as if trying to flick a booger off his finger. The wand responded by throwing up on his feet.

"Thank you, Professor Malfoy," Nicholas grumbled. "Please be careful with these, there are still in development and are especially temperamental. Shaking them or trying to channel magic through them will often cause inconsistent results. Maybe they will explode, maybe they will do nothing, maybe they will work as intended, or maybe they will shine your shoes."

Draco, in an unconscious maneuver cast Scourgify on the vomit on his shoes. The wand erupted into a large flame and quickly began cooking Draco's feet. Nicholas cast a quick Aqueous to put out the fire. Draco was unharmed, despite being scared, shrieking slightly, and having shoes that smelled like burnt puke.

"Perhaps someone there is a grown-up who could use Professor Malfoy's wand?"

"No!" Draco whined. "I'll be good."

Nicholas eyed Draco and continued. "These wands will cast stunners, as well as enervates, protego shields, mid-level power summoning charms, levitation charms, a distance messaging charm, as well as conjure water, fire, and grapes."

"Grapes?" Albus asked with a raised eyebrow. He was unaware he was pointing his thin stick towards his Potions professor and a grape flew out of the wand, hitting Severus in the eye rather severely.



Nicholas chuckled. "Yes that is correct. Please don't speak anything else until I finish." The staff all nodded their acquiescence. "We haven't gotten around to securing the triggers properly and they will react anytime you say these words: Stun, Wake, Shield, Come here, Lift, Send, Water, Fire, and Grapes. They should all be correctly reading intent and heat from being held, so you cannot just call out the words and trigger someone else's wand." Nicholas shrugged. "We hope."

"I don't think any of the healing prototypes are quite ready to be tested, and most of these wands should have plenty of these spells in them. There is a limit though. Probably only a couple hundred of each of the spells. If you encounter any problems or situations, use a messaging spell to call for either myself or Professor Potter, as we are going to be the only ones here truly capable of magic. If you set the wands down, you can say the words and nothing should happen, but if they're in your sleeve or pocket and you say them, it's possible there will be enough connection to trigger the spell. Are there any questions?"

Nicholas saw the staff understood and finally asked, "Alright Albus. Just where is Minnie? The entire student body is here as well as the staff except for her now."

Albus shook his head "No idea." He lifted his thin brown stick into the air and said, "Come here Minnie!"

Nicholas looked at the Headmaster. "Did you honestly expect that to work?"

Albus shrugged and barely had time to look up and see an extremely frightened cat seem to fall out of the once again working enchanted ceiling. As the cat fell, she dug in her claws and managed to catch onto Albus' beard her momentum stopping her barely a foot from the floor. Albus responded with a dignified, "Yeowch!"

Nicholas saw this, and after a silent conversation began cracking up. "Oh this perfect." He was still snickering while the cat was angrily hissing. "And another interesting effect of the nullification field. It

appears Professor McGonagall was in her animagus form of a cat. And when the magic switch got turned off, she was unable to change her form back. So even when the portraits were working again she still couldn't even leave her chambers, since she couldn't open the door."

The cat in question was snapping its jaws chasing Nicholas in a small circle.

Albus asked, "Can't you just change her back?"

Nicholas paused and the cat in question caught up to him and dug her claws into his lower leg. Nicholas yelped and kicked her away. "Now why on earth would I want to do that?"

The chase was on again. Nicholas running around people and away from the cat. "I mean Hogwarts has enough magic, if she was able to transport her to here, she surely could have transformed her back to normal if Hogwarts was so inclined."

The cat didn't like this answer and kept hissing and chasing after Nicholas.

"I think I'd be best served just following Hogwarts' lead." Nicholas explained as he kept scampering around the staff table.

A voice echoed throughout the Great Hall. "Actually, it wasn't Hogwarts who moved her. It was me."

All those present had time to look up and see Professor Potter appear through the enchantment on the ceiling of the Great Hall. He was falling to the ground and dropping fast. "Aieeee!" he screamed in joy at his free fall. All of the staff scrambled back, fearing he might land on them. Harry had time to mutter, "traitors" as the staff all moved out of the way of the inevitable splat.

Luckily for Harry, it never came and rather than bounce off the floor of the Great Hall, Harry was simply sucked into the stone and disappeared. He came walking calmly straight out of the stone wall behind the staff table. "Oh man, that's fun."

Albus had seen Harry pull off some crazy stuff in the past. He had dealt with this before and knew proper procedure was to be concise. "Harry, explain."

Harry smiled. "Oh, I just have to help out Hogwarts some, and she is in turn helping me out some, I suppose you could say. While no other magic is working here, she's punished me into completely redoing and updating all of the wards and protections on the grounds. It might be easier on future Headmasters now." Harry seemed to be considering some possibilities before shaking his head. "Anyways, the whole mini-coma and shock therapy seems to have bonded me and her a bit closer together. I saw Professor McGonagall scratching on her door and realized she was locked in. Speaking of," Harry cast the spell and the school saw the cat grow into the familiar form of their transfiguration professor. "Welcome back, Professor McGonagall."

"Thank you, Professor Potter," she replied while staring angrily at Nicholas. She sniffed and made a pained face. "Oh lord, what's that smell? Severus, are you wearing that cologne again?"

Draco raised his hand, "Ahh, that's probably just the burnt puke on my shoes that you smell."

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Nicholas began, "Professor Potter?"

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Alright, but be careful."

"You know me," Nicholas said with a guilty smile.

"Yeah, I kinda do," Harry said with a smile. He turned towards the armed staff members, "Okay guys. Headmaster, Professor Granger, Professor Snape, Professor Malfoy. You all come with me. Old St. Nick and Professor McGonagall can keep the kids busy." Harry got one of those smiles that would make Death Eaters wet their pants. "You guys want to feel something cool?"

Professor Snape remembered that question from his youth and blurted out "No!" as quickly as he could. Albus, Hermione, and Draco were all in the process of replying negatively when the five staff members all fell through the solid floor, only to come freefalling from the enchanted ceiling. The students all stopped and stared at the sight of their professors and Headmaster shrieking like little girls, with the exception of Professor Potter, who was whooping with delight. Professor Snape managed to invert himself and fall face first back through the floor, while Professor Malfoy did his best to run in place on air. His efforts were futile, though extremely comical for the rest of the staff and students. This time when the five staff members fell through the floor they did not come back, but the absence of girlish shrieking seemed to trigger the laughter many students were holding in.

Nicholas allowed the students to settle down. He then instructed Dobby to inform the house elves of what was happening and to ask him if they needed help preparing meals the muggle way. He conjured up many muggle board games, even setup a poker table, and advised all the students that were falling behind in their studies to take advantage of the current situation. When it became apparent the students had accepted the absence of magic and were entertaining themselves, he approached the Deputy Headmistress. "Professor McGonagall," he began slowly. "A situation beyond Hogwarts next

two days has come up and I was hoping to discuss a delicate matter with you.”

Minerva couldn't help but blush in shame. “Wouldn't this be better postponed until we have some privacy?”

Nicholas smiled. “Perhaps, but I think we can get by with a localized silencing charm, while keeping an eye on all the little miscreants here. And before you get too scared, it is not at all about what you're thinking.”

Minerva acquiesced and sat down next to Nicholas at the staff table.

Nicholas cast a couple spells around them and began. “Forgive me for prying, Minnie, but you do so well with children. Your cat instincts have you completely protective of your Gryffindors and I wonder why you've never had children of your own?”

Minerva looked surprised at the conversation. “Well, I'll be honest, Nicholas. I loved my husband John very deeply, God rest his soul. And in truth, I believe my desire to have children left with him. I'm not opposed to children, but I doubt I could ever love anyone the way I loved John. And I wouldn't want a child to be the product of anything but a deeply in love couple. Of course, that's not to say,” Minnie began blushing unconsciously. “Err, that is, I mean, I have needs and...”

“I've often wondered if cats will go into heat even after menopause,” Nicholas said with smile. “Maybe once you're old enough, Minnie, you can tell me.”

“Dear Merlin, Nicholas. You have the candor and restraint of a giant.” Minnie said after paling dramatically followed by a blush.

“I am a bit blunt, aren't I?” Nicholas stated. Minerva agreed with a frown. “Well, since that is about as perfect a cue as I can find, I'll take advantage of my bluntness. Minerva, I think you should have a child.”

Minnie looked left and looked right. “Right now?”

Nicholas paled. "Umm, crap. Let me rephrase that. Minerva, there is a child in need of a good home, and I believe you are uniquely qualified to raise him."

Minerva raised an eyebrow. "I teach full-time and live at a school ten months of the year."

Nicholas was ecstatic she made no effort to refuse. "That won't be a problem, as he will most likely be a student here in less than two years."

"Why me?" Minnie asked. "And why is it your responsibility to try and find a home for this boy?"

Nicholas sighed. "Because he has no one else. His parents died when he was quite young, and he has been living at St. Mungo's for years. Harry did his usual breaking the rules of magic and has managed to help heal the boy and so now most likely, the burden of keeping him from a muggle orphanage would fall to Harry. I don't think he would be the most responsible of parents, and from what I hear Simon really liked you." Nicholas ended with a hopeful shrug.

"Simon?" Minnie said with a slight smile. "He's healthy?"

Nicholas was jumping for joy inside at the slight smile. "He will be soon according to Healer Halper. And with a healthy lifestyle, he won't be welcome as a permanent resident at St. Mungo's anymore. I wish you would consider the idea. And once Mr. Potter is conscious again in a few days, he'll be going to visit Simon. Simply meet with the boy, and think about it."

"Professor Potter is unconscious?" Minnie asked with a smile.

Nicholas shook his head. "Not at the moment, but even his reserves won't hold up to completely redoing the wards around here."

"Are you sure there aren't any proper wizarding families looking to adopt?" Minerva asked carefully.

Nicholas shrugged. "According to Healer Halper, he doubts it. And there is another reason Harry and I immediately thought of you for Simon."

Minerva raised an inquiring eyebrow.

Nicholas smiled and shook his head. "Oh no. That one's a secret for you to find out when you go with Harry to visit Simon. Now to help combat the students boredom, let's go see if Professor Longbottom has some of his mom's secret recipe."

The five staff members all abruptly but gently landed in the Headmaster's office. Well, as gently as Professor Snape could land on his face at least.

"You evil bloody..." was as far as Severus got before remembering he was armed. "Grapes! Grapes! Grapes!"

The effectiveness of the attack was summarized by Harry catching the third grape in his mouth and chewing it up with a smile.

"Oh sweet merciful heavens," Draco said as he kissed the solid ground he was grateful to be on.

Albus settled himself into his chair, only to discover the custom cushioning charm on it was ineffective and it was only as warm and comforting as a normal chair. His world came crashing down around him when he went to grab a few lemon drops from his magical dish and none came from it. He nearly started wailing in despair when Harry reached out and grabbed a few Hot Tamales from the other candy dish.

Harry saw the pitiful look on Albus' face and said "Oh for Pete's sake." A wave of his hand, and Albus' lemon drop dish was overflowing with conjured lemon drops.

"Praise be to Potter. A hundred points to Hufflepuff." Albus exclaimed.

"Enough!" An irritated Hermione interrupted. "Alright Harry, so just why did you decide to nggghh..." Hermione's eyes went wide and she slapped a hand over her mouth.

Harry looked curiously at Hermione. And all the other people around him.

Severus asked, "Why can't Professor Granger talk about aaaaoooooga."

Harry looked carefully at all the portraits and doublechecked with Hogwarts that no one else was hiding or spying on them. "Only if someone who doesn't know that secret is present or listening in..."

Finally Harry noticed Draco was looking a bit more nervous than the others. Harry stared at Draco until he looked up and Harry caught and held eye contact for just a second. "You've got to be freaking kidding me!" Harry burst into laughter.

Professor Snape and the Headmaster watched the Defense Professor curiously. Hermione stepped over towards Draco and was scrutinizing him. She tried to whisper to him, "Harry igggigggguh." Hermione stepped back pointing viciously. "Who are you!" she demanded.

Severus rolled his eyes. "I realize muggleborns are naturally a bit slower, but honestly woman, you've been colleagues for over a year and went to school together for seven more."

Hermione snapped an angry look at the greasy man and was rewarded by seeing him jump up and start smacking his arm viciously.

"Oh for the love of Salazar! I get a two-day detention as a muggle but that still works!" He was scowling and angrily glaring about 'crotch rotter Potter.'

"Severus, behave," Harry scolded in between chuckles.

"Harry, explain," Albus requested.

Harry was still snickering some and put it best as, "I'm afraid Draco has been possessed."



“What?” Severus asked staring ashen at his apprentice who was now nervously backed into a corner of the round office.

Harry’s laughs came back.

Albus chided. “I hardly think this is a laughing matter, Harry.”

“Oh but that’s where you’re wrong, Albus.” Harry explained. “Because it appears that Draco, here, is possessed by himself.”

Hermione didn’t expect that at all. “How is that possible? That doesn’t even make sense.”

Harry shook his head. “I didn’t think it really was possible.”

“Apprentice!” Severus snapped. “Explain yourself.”

“Sorry, Sev,” Draco shrugged. “I’m not sure how I got here either.”

Harry nodded. “And it appears the secret in question is unknown to this Draco.” Harry squinted his eyes and continued to observe Professor Malfoy. “Who is clearly our Draco, and not a dimension traveler, just perhaps a little... younger?”

Draco smiled and shrugged, unsure himself. “Sounds about right to me. I just kind of realized I existed a while back, but was on the wrong side of my body’s Occlumency shields.”

“Of course,” Harry said with a grin. “And the nullification field took down the active shields for the first time.” Harry frowned. “But that still doesn’t explain your existence. Schizophrenics don’t make back-ups of themselves, they create new personalities. Trust me. I’ve done some research on the subject.”

Draco frowned in thought. “I’m not certain, but I think I came from my diary.”

Albus guffawed loudly while Harry just looked at him in shock. Harry broke the silence. “You have got to be kidding me.” Harry shook his

head in exasperation. "Albus? Did Draco seriously manage to accidentally split his soul?"

Albus frowned but was chuckling. "It certainly appears so." He began wagging his finger at Draco. "This is why you should not practice Dark Magic! It's too dangerous."

Severus grumbled, "Only in the hands of idiots." He paused and added, "Or Gryffindors."

"Oi!" possessed Draco yelled. "I am not a Gryffindor."

Harry sighed. "Oh please, Draco. You're even more Gryffindor than I am Slytherin."

"Could someone please explain to me what's going on?" Hermione asked loudly, tired of being left out of the loop.

Harry looked at her. "Remember second year? Ginny and Riddle's diary?" Harry asked rhetorically and continued. "Well, I would imagine Lucius taught Draco how to make a diary and Draco didn't quite realize what he was doing."

Draco's shoulders dropped and he was frustrated damning his 'wankerish bloody wanker of a useless ponce' father.

Hermione did a pretty good impression of Albus with just a shell-shocked guffaw at Professor Malfoy. "Oh Merlin. Someone needs to revoke his permission to practice Dark Arts."

Draco rolled his eyes. "One little mistake and everybody's a critic over every little thing."

Harry shook his head. "Were I not quite glad to be dating Ginny, I'd be tempted to see what fate would do to these two together."

Draco made a pained face. "It would take more than a flea dip before I'd even con- aauuuuggghhhh!" Whatever else Draco was going to say was lost as he fell to the floor in unbearable pleasure.

Severus quietly observed with a passive face. "You know, it's so much easier to deal with pain, and to get used to it and block it out. Pleasure is far more devious and vindictive. I think I may have preferred Tom's Cruciatus even."

Harry and Albus shared an evil maniacal look. Harry's teeth were showing in an animalistic grin. "Amateurs."

Severus, Draco, and Hermione all shuddered at the emotions in the air.

"Anyways, Draco," Harry began. "I'm sorry to say we're going to have to get rid of you. The proper Draco who should be in control of that body has lost a piece of his soul by accidentally making you."

Draco gulped and said nothing.

"But we're going to have to wait until your, or his, shields and magic are back. So in the meantime, accept this hex or... or else." Harry finished with a shrug. He cast his familiar purple knowledge suppression hex and waited until the spell was complete and bound to him. Draco seemed to not even consider refusing the hex. "Okay we can talk freely again," Harry said.

It was as if someone just flipped a switch in Hermione. "What the hell are you doing bombing away the magic in Hogwarts!"

"Err good God Hermione." Harry winced. "You must have been bursting to say that."

A flustered Hermione nodded, while an amused Albus smiled.

Draco meekly raised his hand, not wanting to interrupt the scary wizard or downright frightening witch.

Harry responded to the unasked question. "I am Nicholas Flamel, and yes this situation was a semi-planned live testing opportunity of some of our, or if you prefer my, work on Dementor Blood."

"Semi-planned?" Albus inquired.

Harry shrugged. "I didn't know Tonks was going to come to me to help me prank me."

"Oww," Severus exclaimed clutching his head.

Possessed Draco was still processing Harry's exclamation. "Wait! So you're dating the mud-bleed?" Draco forced a weak smile and hoped his slip wasn't too obvious.

Harry nodded solemnly, "Yes, Draco I am. And since you're obviously not up to date on what you, yourself, are currently doing, I should warn you that you're dating a muggle woman."

Draco paled to the point of being practically clear and hoarsely exclaimed, "What!" before his eyes rolled up into his head and he passed out.

Albus, Hermione, and Harry all started cracking up. Even Severus was highly amused at seeing his apprentice faint. "That was cruel, Harry."

Harry smiled. "I try."

Albus adopted his stern frown and said, "Harry, explain."

"Oh right," Harry replied. "Just testing out a few things, as well as seeing if there were limits on the nullification. If it brought down Hogwarts, then for all intents and purposes the answer is: No, there aren't any limits. Nicholas has probably sent the Unspeakables away, and he wanted to speak to Minnie about something."

"Harry," Albus reminded. "You're Nicholas."

"Very good," Harry said slowly nodding. "Tell me, Albus, were you using magic to boost your intelligence?"

"Oh shush, child." Albus scolded. "Talking about yourself in the third person sounds crazy. Well, unless you're a professional Quidditch player boasting about your skills."

Harry rolled his eyes. "It's shorter to explain it that way than it is to say, 'I wanted to talk to Minnie, but in my appearance as Nicholas Flamel, and preferably in an open public setting with a lot of witnesses.'"

"Oh yes," Severus sneered. "That sounds much less crazy."

"Anyways," Harry continued ignoring the older men. "I'm going to be doing the wards, and the strain will probably knock me out for a few days. I need you all, who know the big secret to make sure I can recuperate in peace. But before I do, I knew I'd need to answer your questions, so is there anything else?"

Albus inquired, "Won't Nicholas be here?"

Harry nodded. "Should be."

Albus carefully replied, "Then if any questions come up, I shall ask him."

Harry shrugged. "Alright then. I'm headed back to the heart of Hogwarts. You may feel some strong magical shifts in the air, but that means it's working."

"Wait, Harry." Albus interjected. "Before you go, please wake Professor Malfoy, and make sure he will be okay."

Harry agreed and cast a wandless Ennervate on the unconscious man.

Draco slowly woke up and took a glance at his present environment. He looked extremely confused until the events leading up to his fainting came rushing back to him. "Oh Merlin, Potter! Tell me it's not true! Tell me I'm not really dating a... a... a woman."

Review this Story/Chapter

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

And without warning, Severus' head filled with unbidden visuals and imagined conversations. At the forefront was the idea of a wizarding portrait featuring his apprentice who kept winking and licking his lips despite wearing only an open vest and overly tight leather assless chaps. "Unclean mental images! Unclean mental images!" Severus exclaimed. "Make it stop! Please!"

Severus let out a strained garbled yell and crumpled to the floor clenching the phoenix tattoo on his arm. He was unconscious in less than two seconds.

Albus gave Harry a frown.

"Hey! Don't give me that look." Harry defended. "He was begging for it stop. I obliged." Harry smiled cheekily, "Personal enjoyment went by the wayside."

"Of course," Albus sarcastically replied.

Draco was still looking around confused. Harry decided to help him, "Umm Draco, yes, I was just joking with you. And on that subject, thanks for sharing, but please don't... anymore." Harry shook his head, as he had the misfortune of picking up the thoughts Severus hadn't been protecting and had nearly been projecting. "Anyways, boys and girl, time for a little one on one with Mademoiselle Hoggy Warty, ta-ta!" And with a slight slurping sound Harry melted into the floor and disappeared from the Headmaster's office.

The Headmaster used his stick and called out "Wake" while pointing it at Professor Snape. He was mildly disappointed to see the spell worked exactly as it should have and Severus was calmly making his way back to consciousness.

The castle was functioning almost normally and the four staff members, Draco, Severus, Hermione, and Albus all made their way back to the Great Hall. Hermione tried to engage the accidentally

possessed, questionably outed Professor Malfoy in a conversation. "Draco, can I ask you a question?"

Draco started to sneer but didn't seem to have his heart in it. Hermione took this as a positive reply. She boldly inquired, "Who's Sandy?"

"Not me!" Draco paled dramatically. "Err that is... umm, what?"

Hermione pursed her lips and saw how uncomfortable the question made him. "I've heard you and Harry mention her name, but neither you nor he seems to explain anything. Given your apparent lifestyle preferences, now I'm even more curious. So, who is she?"

Draco tried to hide the relief he was feeling. He scowled and just said "None of your business."

"Come on!" Hermione pleaded. "I can keep a secret obviously," she explained pointing to all the rest of the people in on Harry's big secret. "I'm just curious what she must have done to you."

Draco was beginning to believe the rumors of Hermione being able to survive on only food, shelter, clothing, and explanations. "She is none of your concern, and if you continue this line of questioning I will curse you severely."

Hermione wasn't easily deterred but apparently younger Draco was as tight-lipped as current Draco. "Oh really? You'll curse me?" She said pointing mockingly at his thin brown stick.

Draco remembered his current situation and added, "I'll shoot a grape in your eye."

Severus apparently had been listening in. "Trust me. It hurts more than you'd think." His snarky smile was back. "But please, by all means, keep interrogating my apprentice."

Hermione just harrumphed to herself and ignored the antisocial Slytherins.

When the group arrived back in the Great Hall they noticed Nicholas and Minerva talking under a silencing and privacy charm. The students were all playing cards and board games.

Hermione felt a little fear when she heard Herman Crabbe asking a classmate, "I understand how to play Connect Four, I just don't see why the game is called that."

Nicholas could apparently sense the professor's return and dispelled the charms around him and Minerva. Hermione had a saccharine sweet smile on her face and she promptly deposited herself right into Nicholas' lap. She kissed him very passionately marking her territory before turning to the deputy Headmistress. "Oh I'm sorry, Minnie. Sometimes I forget I'm in public when I'm around this hot hunk of man."

Nicholas cheerfully added. "I have that same problem."

Hermione was slightly disappointed by the lack of incensed anger from the Transfiguration Professor.

"Understandable, Hermy," Minerva said with an equally fake smile. "I would imagine being so young and inexperienced might bring out the instinctive territorial side of you around someone as distinguished as Professor Flamel."

"Distinguished," Nicholas repeated. "What a wonderful euphemism for geezer. Tell me Her-my-on-my-knee, is Daddy going to need to start spanking you, or will you inform us of where Mr. Potter is now?" Nicholas managed to successfully redirect the two staff member's ire his way.

Hermione blushed a bit thinking before shyly responding, "He's working on the wards now. Seems to think he'll be out of it for a couple days."

Nicholas nodded. "Funny thing about Harry, is he's usually right. Though he may surprise even himself."



Minerva asked, "Will we be able to notice the changes while he's redoing the wards?"

Nicholas considered the question and responded, "If I were to just make a guess, I would say... Yes."

Right as he said the word Yes, the entire castle of Hogwarts flashed a quick bright white light. Nothing blinding, but a bit disorienting. People looked around amazed to see the entire castle appeared to be made of glass now as they could see, slightly distorted in every direction. Several students in nearby bathrooms began shrieking. Harry's voice echoed throughout the Hall, "Oops. Sorry." Another white flash and the castle appeared normal again. "My bad," the echoing voice of the Defense Professor added.

Hermione inquired about her ring and ability to cast magic. Nicholas explained to her that the ring on her wand, should be able to channel the magic through her actual wand, and that there was a massive amount of magic stored within it. The majority of it being unspecific as possible and the triggers were the usual magical incantations.

Hermione sent a tickling charm at Nicholas who just let the spell hit him and he sarcastically said, "Hardy-har-har." She turned to the Headmaster and cast a cheering charm.

He sat there and took the spell, which unfortunately caused boils to appear all over him.

"I am so so sorry," Hermione began to immediately apologize and cast the counter to what she assumed was a common boil-making curse. This had the result of causing even more boils to appear on the old man.

Hermione then tried Finite, Finite Incantatem, and even Nagana-Hoogana-Ragana. Each spell just caused more and more boils to appear on the frustrated and pained Headmaster.

Nicholas was snickering as quietly as he could, while the rest of the staff just watched in shock.

Hermione was panicking and snapped at her giggling old boyfriend, Furnunculus, the boil producing curse.

Nicholas stuck his hand out and took the curse on his hand. Boils popped up all over it. He quickly countered them after it had been shown the curse worked.

Finally Hermione had the bright idea and cast Furnunculus at the Headmaster. He just whimpered and took the spell, which had the unfortunate result of him growing boils on his boils.

Nicholas stopped Hermione from causing the Headmaster any more pain and removed the boils from Albus. His lips were twitching as he explained, "It appears Mr. Potter put some sort of selective jinx on that ring for Albus. My apologies Headmaster. I seem to be unable to spot Mr. Potter's subtleties in my old age."

Albus just grumbled when Nicholas whispered, "Besides I owed you for Minnie."

One student came up to his former Defense Professor and asked why the rings worked with normal spell incantations but the thin brown sticks didn't. Nicholas just smiled and said, "Well, we don't want the people using them to get confused." This of course only confused the student.

Throughout the rest of the day, the castle occasionally shook with power and flashes of light were erupting all over the place. Around six o'clock the Defense Professor's voice was heard one last time. The fatigue was obvious in his trembling. "Thank you and good night." Hogwarts seemed to swell with warmth and joy, and everyone in the castle knew the work on the wards was done.

No one was able to locate the Defense Professor after that, but they assumed Hogwarts was keeping him somewhere safe to recuperate.

Day two of 'muggle' Hogwarts dawned bright and early. The house elves were running around delivering breakfast trays of food, frustrated at their inability to magic it places, but still loyal and tireless

workers. The students looked up, wondering where the post was this morning. Albus asked Nicholas about this and he replied, "Albus, you know owls use their own innate magic to determine where to deliver mail."

Albus nodded. "Ahh, so there's probably hundreds of owls either on the edge of the bomb's effects or flying around aimlessly on the grounds."

Nicholas concurred and went back to his breakfast.

Albus figured it was worth a shot, and aimed his thin brown stick in the air, "Come here post owls!" The ensuing havoc the spell caused provided enormous amusement to just about everyone not named Albus Dumbledore. Needless to say, the house elves ran out of bacon and the Headmaster needed to bathe and change his robes immediately.

Hermione found her copy of the Daily Prophet and read the front page.

Intensive Muggle Studies Weekend Excursion at Hogwarts!

Hogwarts and Hogsmeade are covered in a nullification field preventing all forms of magic. According to sources, the nullification field is rumored to last until Sunday morning. There is little threat of attack, as even Dark Wizards would be unable to perform any magic in the area. Even one family of muggles stumbled its way into Hogsmeade, but the absence of magic just saw them turn around to leave fearing voodoo and strange cults.

It appears the cause of the nullification field is a secret research project between Defense Professor and Savior of the Wizarding World, Harry Potter and former Defense Professor and legendary iconic hero, Nicholas Flamel. Both leaders of the project were unavailable for comment, or so it is assumed as no post owls nor floos could reach them at press time.

Some members of the Ministry are drawing similarities to events that happened at the Ministry of Magic over a year ago. A level of house-

elf terror alert orange was declared purely as a precautionary measure.

Hermione shook her head at the Ministry's ineptitude though she couldn't help but smile when she saw Dobby dressed up like a bright orange conquering hero. His sword was tied to his scabbard and he was scaring a few of the younger years.

Ginny arrived that afternoon and joined just about everyone in the Great Hall. "Hey guess what? I can see the thestrals!"

Nicholas considered and said, "That seems logical if their innate magic is what makes them invisible."

Ginny added, "I also saw what looked like a large group of eight foot tall gigantic hamsters."

Severus paled and slunk down into his seat.

Nicholas picked up an a stray thought from the unprotected mind of the Potions Master and asked, "Were they dancing and calling for Severus?"

Professor Snape made a painful whimper in his seat, while Ginny just shook her head a bit unsure about Nicholas.

Nicholas smiled brightly and turned to Albus, "Headmaster, I had no idea, but it sounds like you may have some of the mythical ancestors of Demiguises living in the forest here. I truly thought they were just legend."

Albus smiled cheerfully. "I wonder what other surprises may be uncovered in the forest."

Nicholas shrugged. "I think it might not necessarily be safe to find out. I would imagine invisible creatures wouldn't be too pleased at the moment."

Ginny interrupted, "So where's my afternoon date hiding out at? Or is he going to cancel on account of the Intensive Muggle Studies?"

Albus replied, "I'm afraid he is indisposed at the moment. He completely redid the wards on Hogwarts yesterday and is recuperating somewhere unknown to us."

Ginny frowned. "He promised me he'd let me know if he had to cancel." Ginny smiled viciously. "Guess I'll just have to make him regret breaking his promise."

"Whoa, whoa! Settle down, Gin!" an unexpected voice rang out and a floating apparition of Harry appeared in front of her.

"Harry!" Ginny and Hermione and Tonks all shrieked out at the sight of a ghost of Harry Potter. The student body was unsure whether to be scared, sad, or laughing at the appearance of the incorporeal Defense Professor. Scared for a variety of reasons, sad because he was probably dead, and laughing because he was essentially naked and wearing a sheet wrapped around him like an oversized diaper.

Nicholas chuckled at his alter ego's appearance. It is much easier to laugh at one's self when you can observe yourself from an outside point of view.

Ginny trembled. "Are you d- d- dead?"

Harry shook his head and smiled. "No, no. I'm not dead."

Tonks trembled. "Then how are you a ghost?"

Harry smiled. "Just a sort of unconscious astral projection. I'm only in a slight magical coma. Once my reserves build back up, I'll wake up right as rain."

Hermione trembled. "Umm... your clothes?"

Ghostly Harry grumbled. "Not my choice. And I can't do any magic, nor can ghosts change their clothes. And for you information, even castles are particularly sensitive about their age. One little comment and she said she'd treat me like I apparently deserved."

Albus, while chuckling at his appearance, frowned playfully and said, "Why do you get all the cool abilities? No one else gets to be a ghost when they're in magical comas."

Harry raised an eyebrow at the Headmaster. "You ever hear of Karma?"

Albus nodded.

"Well, I figure she met the Dursleys." Harry said with a cold look at the Headmaster. "Something you seem to have neglected to do for the first decade or so of my life."

Albus looked a bit ashamed but grumbled an angry, "You're welcome," at Harry.

"You know they say nothing is more precious than the innocence of a child." Nicholas added with a smirk. "Of course the people who say things like that also think Love would be a power to overcome a Dark Lord." Nicholas made a scoffing motion of his hand and muttered, "pshaw."

"Anyways, Ginny, I'm not sure I am actually recuperating when I'm projecting like this, so I am very sorry, but I think magical comas excuse me from being unable to contact you."

Ginny grudgingly agreed.

"Although, I'm out of it and can't physically move, so if you wanted to fondle me, I could probably float next to you and cheer you on." The ghostly Harry shrugged.

"Naw, that's okay." Ginny said. "But you owe me for missing our date."

"Thank you sweetie," Harry said and kissed Ginny on the cheek. Ginny only felt the slight cold of a ghost's touch and smiled. Harry continued, "Alright guys, I need to get back into my body and replenishing my reserves, because I've probably got another two

days of coma. My classes Monday can be covered by Nicholas, since this is all his fault-”

“No, it’s your fault.” Nicholas muttered back.

“No, it’s your fault.” Harry immediately mumbled in reply.

“No, it’s your fa-”

“No, it’s your-”

“No, it’s y-”

“Children!” Minnie yelled, stopping the pair.

Harry smiled at Minnie and winked. “Want one?”

Minerva’s lips thinned into a stern look. “I’m considering it.”

Harry smiled brilliantly. “Wonderful! I should wake up late Monday afternoon, I’m hoping. How about you and me go for a visit during dinner?”

Minerva nodded with a slight smile.

“Splendid. Toodles all!” And just like that, the ghostly Harry disappeared from the Great Hall.

Albus frowned. “I still don’t see why he gets to do everything. Karma be damned, his childhood wasn’t that bad.”

And on a perfectly sunny Saturday afternoon, a temporarily muggle Albus Dumbledore was struck by lightning, despite being indoors.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

“Santos!” Harry happily exclaimed.

“Harry!” Healer Halper replied with equal fervor.

“How are you doing? Life treating you well?” Harry asked leaning forward to hug the man in greeting.

Healer Halper returned the hug a little uncomfortably, “Yeah, well enough. Yourself?”

“Can’t complain.” Harry replied before letting an awkward silence settle. He added, “You know, Santos, I really don’t know you that well.”

Santos relaxed and looked relieved. “Oh good. Because even I thought that hug was a bit unwarranted.”

“Exactly! I’ve been spending too much time around women these days.” Harry agreed with a mirthful shake of his head. “I mean there’s friendly, and then there’s arguably homoerotic. It’d be so much easier if we could just greet people with a rabbled grunt or if absolutely necessary a handshake.”

Healer Halper was nodding vigorously. “All of my wife’s friends greet me with hugs and kisses on my cheek. If I smile, my wife sends me to the couch. If I don’t, I get called cold and rude and sometimes get sent to the couch.”

“Women are completely nutters.”

Santos frowned. “Harry, I’m a healer. The official term is bonkers.”

Harry was chuckling until Minerva cleared her throat a bit insistently. “Oh right, I’m sorry. You’re not nutters of course, Minnie. Professor Minerva McGonagall, I’d like you to meet Healer Santos Halper. Santos, this is Minerva.”



“Pleasure to meet you, Professor.”

“And you as well, Healer Halper.” Minnie replied with a stern look.

“Right.” Santos added. “Well, Harry, Simon is making leaps and bounds. I expect he will be healthy enough to leave within a week. Probably two weeks after that we’ll be placing him at St. Olaf’s Home for Unwanted Children and Competitively Priced Insurance if he hasn’t a home by then.” Healer Halper started making a sad face. “It’s just so sad to see an orphan get something so wonderful and at the same time so horri-”

“Relax, Santos,” Harry interrupted. “Minnie’s already considering taking him in, and she can’t hide the smile each time I bring it up. And Simon hasn’t even appealed to her instincts yet.”

Minerva frowned at Harry. “You are not used car salesmen trying to move a lemon off the lot. It is despicable how manipulative you two are when we are talking about a child’s welfare.”

Harry rolled his eyes. “So says Albus’ longtime Deputy.” That shut Minnie up pretty quick. “So come on, Minnie. Let’s go see Simon.”

The three of them walked towards Simon’s room. Harry paused, “Err, Santos, you might want to wait outside. Just for the sake of plausible deniability.”

Santos rolled his eyes. “As you wish.”

Harry and Minnie walked in and found Simon once again playing with his two Harry Potter action figures. Apparently they were fighting each other viciously. With their only weapons at the moment their tongues and angry kissing noises.

Harry cleared his throat. “Hiya Simon.”

Simon dropped his action figures, though Minerva would still insist that they’re dolls, and jumped up. “Uncle Poncy!” He embraced his Uncle Poncy with a hug. “You fixed me! Just like you said you would!”

Minerva observed the young boy she had taken an immediate liking too, though she was unsure whether living with her at Hogwarts would be a good idea. She was a bit curious about what Harry had mentioned about appealing to her instincts.

Harry smiled. "I just helped you out with a trick. You had to do all the work."

Simon's smile left quickly. "The Healers say I may have to go to a muggle place called St. Olaf's."

Harry smiled at Simon. "Oh don't worry, Simon. It won't be so bad. You'll get to play with other kids your own age, in a more normal place than a hospital, and then you'll be off to Hogwarts in less than two years."

Simon was still frowning. "I know. I just doubt I'll get to..." he paused and looked at the stern faced Professor McGonagall. "Err... do that thing that I like to do."

Harry looked over at Minnie and smiled brightly enough to worry Minerva. "Actually, Simon. You know how I made you promise not to do it in front of anyone?"

Simon nodded.

"Well," Harry began. "I'd like for you to do it for Professor McGonagall, if you don't mind."

Simon smiled brightly. "Sure!" And with only a slight pop, Simon was replaced by an adorable cute little kitten.

Minerva's stone-faced sternness melted away instantly and she gasped and covered her mouth with her hands. Her eyes were tearing up quickly as she whispered out, "Oh my kitty!" Reacting only on instinct Minerva immediately popped into her animagus form and ran over to Simon. Before Simon could even turn or try to play, Minnie, in her cat form began licking and cleaning the little kitten quite thoroughly. Minnie flopped to the floor and Simon relaxed and flopped

right up next to her. Both felines were purring loudly, and Minnie continued to bathe the kitten.

Harry thought they'd hit it off, but this was ridiculous. Simon, it appeared had fallen asleep already, and Minnie's eyes were closed while she relentlessly licked all of Simon's head, neck, and back clean. Harry decided to give them some time and went out into the hall.

Santos was waiting for him, looking hopeful and awaiting an answer to the unasked question.

Harry smiled. "I think Simon's got a new mom."

Santos face split into a grin. "Wonderful! That didn't take long."

Harry shrugged. "I think they might have fallen asleep already."

Santos peeked into the room and saw the kitten, sleeping peacefully with his head rested across the older cat's abdomen. "Of course!" he exclaimed. "I had completely forgotten Professor McGonagall's animagus form. I think the animal inside is making this decision for her."

Harry agreed. The two men watched the cat and kitten resting peacefully.

Santos broke the silence. "I don't suppose you'll share what you did with Simon, will you?"

Harry grinned at the Healer. "Is this professional curiosity or an official inquiry?"

Santos shook his head. "Merely curiosity. I've already had a deposition with my colleagues questioning my alternative healing methods. As soon as I mentioned that you seemed to have been involved in an unknown capacity they all dropped any formal questioning."

Harry frowned a bit.

Santos saw the look and said, "Not sure if it was because they're afraid of you, or just know there won't be any historical basis or explanation for occurrences once you are involved."

Harry accepted that and answered Santos' question. "I know of a way to take magic from one place and imbue it purposefully into another. Including magical cores or conduits."

Santos raised an eyebrow. "That shouldn't be possible."

Harry smiled and tapped his forehead where his famous scar was. "Because of the connection in this, if I hadn't found a way, then the only way to kill Voldemort would have included dying myself."

Santos nodded. "I can see how that might inspire you to devise a way to break the rules of magic."

"Yup. Even if it means having to live the rest of my years with a healthy amount of Voldemort's former magic within myself."

"Oh good. I was worried you weren't powerful enough before." Santos mockingly replied.

Harry rolled his eyes. "Anyways, one of the things about imbuing foreign magic into another is that it needs to be catered specifically to that person, or be a specific action exclusive to the receiving individual."

"Ahh, of course. And animagus transformations are unique to each person. But how on earth did you train him? The understanding necessary still shouldn't have been possible."

Harry nodded. "I kind of put that into the magic already for him. It's like a master after years of training. A single simple thought triggers it for him. And as long as he only used the magic I put there for it, he wasn't even even touching his own reserves."

Santos shook his head. "Fascinating. And could you do this for others?"

Harry winced. "I'd rather not, as giving away a piece of magic means I'm losing that piece of magic, but if a situation warranted it, I'd be happy to."

Santos paled. "Never mind. Forget I asked. I didn't realize giving away your magic actually meant losing some of your own."

Harry nodded. "If there's no other options, do let me know, as I could probably give away a fair amount of magic and still be alright, but I'd appreciate it being a last resort."

Santos was beginning to see signs of the caring mature man hiding behind the childish façade he showed the world.

"Anyways, I'm going to say goodbye to Minnie, as I suspect she may stay for a bit longer and I have to help a friend who's been possessed for a little while."

Santos looked at the young man and saw he was completely serious. "Very well, Harry. Thank you for sharing, I won't tell a soul. And if you ever need private healing assistance, you only need ask."

Harry and Santos shook hands in a much less awkward manner, and Harry went back into Simon's room.

Simon, the kitten, continued to nap, though Minnie, the cat, looked up at the newcomer.

"I get the feeling you're going to be here a little while longer, Minnie. That about right?"

The cat was smiling and nodded her head.

"Alright, I need to head back to the castle. I'll see you back there when you get there. Tell Simon I said goodbye."

The cat nodded again, and with a pop, Harry disappeared from St. Mungo's. Minnie's eyes widened comically and she started twitching,

as she saw in his wake, Harry had left behind a rather large open bag of catnip.

Harry and Albus were waiting there in the Headmaster's office. A somber Draco Malfoy entered carrying his magical diary.

Albus saw his look and asked, "Why the long face?"

"What?" Draco haughtily exclaimed. He began feeling his head to see if someone had slipped him an engorgement potion.

Harry snickered. "It's an expression. He's asking 'why do you look so sad?'"

Draco sighed. "Well, there's a fifty-fifty shot I'm going to die, right? You expect me to be jumping for joy?"

Albus frowned and Harry shook his head. "You won't be in any danger of getting killed. We're going to try to fuse your soul back together."

"Well yeah, but there's two different Dracos right now, and pretty soon there will be just one. Either one of us is gone and the other continues, or both of us are gone and we're merged into one consciousness."

Harry pointed out, "If you believe that, then your odds are more like 75-25 against you."

Albus scolded when Draco looked sadder. "Harry. You're not helping."

"Wait, so which Draco is in control right now?" Harry asked.

Draco sighed and said, "I'm the newer one I think. I've not lost control since I got here. Though I do sense something on the other side of my Occlumency shields. I take it that's probably the older me?"

Harry looked at Albus and neither seemed to be too sure. "Yeah, probably." Harry replied. "So tell me, Albus. What genius ways have you determined for reuniting a split soul?"

“Me?” Albus indignantly replied. “I thought it was up to you to figure it out.”

Harry sighed loudly. “Crap. So you couldn’t come up with anything either.”

Albus shook his head. “If this second piece of his soul is strong enough to hold off the original’s control of his own body, then I cannot see how the two can be reunited.”

Draco smiled weakly. “So you’re not going to kill me?”

Harry frowned and explained. “Hold on Draco, we may just kill you yet. So Albus, would you agree though, that the further the pieces get from each other, the more twisted and susceptible to evil persuasion they will become?”

Albus nodded. “Oh most definitely. The split soul means he’s something of a half-entity. It could potentially drain his magic even. Of course the darkness would take over and use some evil rituals to try and salvage itself, and corrupt him even further, as any part of Draco Malfoy would refuse becoming a squib or a muggle.”

Draco paled dramatically, not liking the directions this conversation was headed in.

Harry thought about it. “I’m pretty sure I can put the newer Draco back into the diary, but it will still exist there. We don’t want to actually destroy any part of his soul.”

“No we don’t, but as a last resort destroying it separately in the diary, would mean there isn’t any further risk to his magic.” Albus explained. “Of course he’d still only be a half-entity and extremely susceptible to corruption then.”

Harry was brainstorming, while Draco just sat there completely clueless as to what was going on. “Albus, what if we tied the separate soul into his own magical core through an outside link...”

“Well, he would have all of his soul then, it just wouldn’t be united. But to tie it into his magical core would require...oh of course!” Albus explained. “I think that could work, Harry! He would have his entire soul, it just would manifest itself as a separate entity living inside of himself!”

Harry turned to Draco, “What about that option? Both of you would still exist, it’s just you’d have a terribly annoying voice in your head.”

“And my magic?” Draco asked.

“Won’t be affected, as there isn’t any outside drain on it.” Harry replied. “But it may mean that I will have some control over the voice in your head.”

Draco furrowed his brow. “And why is that?”

Harry smiled. “Because right now, a piece of your soul has split off through the diary. Since we don’t know anyway to reunite it with the other piece of your soul, and it’s a significant piece, as it’s strong enough to exist on its own outside of the diary, and possess your body, we’re going to tie it into your body. And in order to remain a part of you, we’re going to attach it to the already active soul magic you have.”

Draco was nodding but processing none of this. “What was that again?”

Harry rolled his eyes. “Instead of your soul being in the diary, I’m going to put it into Tibbles, as Tibbles is a part of you, linked to your proper soul.”

“Tibbles is going to die?” Draco asked with a frown.

Albus was getting tired of this. “Oh for Merlin’s sake! Yes, Tibbles is going to die a bloody, visceral, screaming death! Gone! Kaput! Toasty! But this is the best way to keep your soul in nearly one piece.”



Harry rolled his eyes. "Tibbles isn't really alive Draco. I just felt like animating the tattoo for you. But you, Mr. Diary Draco, will get to become Tibbles."

"Awesome! I get to be a dragon?" Draco asked.

Harry looked at Albus and neither seemed to know. "Umm... perhaps."

"What will I be, if not a dragon?" Draco asked.

Harry shrugged. "No idea. You might have complete control over your appearance and existence, or you might live the rest of your life as a Dark Mark that looks like Argus Filch with a nosebleed."

Draco paled. "And if I refuse to do this?"

Harry leveled a look at Draco. "You can't refuse this."

Draco sighed, and realized that the Dark Mark turned Tibbles made it impossible for him to refuse Harry.

"Draco, if you did, it would more than likely corrupt you completely within a few years. You would have aspirations of power and evil, and would certainly not be safe to be around children at first, which would mean your job, eventually wizards and witches then, and finally at some point, I would be forced to kill you. If you're that worried about what the Mark is going to look like, I'm sure I can figure out a way to change it after the fact."

Draco grudgingly agreed.

Harry pointed out, "The fact that you're so reluctant to do this in the first place, may already be an indication that your split soul is getting corrupted."

Draco scowled at Harry both because there was no way to respond to that, and because Harry might be right. "Fine. Let's do this."

Harry smiled and said. "Lovely. Stupefy." And Draco knew only blackness.

When Draco woke again memories of his bad dream flooded into his mind. He could picture the Headmaster without his shirt on, yelling out "The Power of Potter Compels You! The Power of Potter Compels You! Be gone from this creature!" Draco felt like he'd been chasing after Nifflers for hours. He slowly began listening to the voices in the room.

"I've no idea! The nearest I can figure is that my 'animating' the Mark must have added in complications." An unfortunately familiar voice argued.

"Complications! Hah! You are an idiot!" a snarky and slightly distortedly familiar voice, that sent tingles down Draco's spine, replied punctuating each word.

"Your arguing will most likely just irritate the headache, Tibbles is no doubt going to have." An aged and warm voice interrupted.

Draco's heart warmed immensely as he thought, 'Tibbles is going to live!' He quietly moaned as his body protested sitting up. He rasped out, "Arrggh. Why do I feel so sore?"

"Tibbles!" The snarky yet unidentifiable voice replied.

Draco slowly opened his eyes, and looked at the man who had rushed to his side. The light was harsh, but it would be impossible not to recognize his gorgeous skin tone, his beautiful hair, his soft manicured hands. He looked up into the man's eyes. "Man, are you good looking."

His twin smiled and winked. "Oh Tibbles. Who knew this kind of beauty could be replicated?"

Draco seemingly only now realized he was Tibbles. He looked over and saw Albus watching him curiously. He looked over and saw Harry making a sheepish shrug. "Oh sheesh. You really Pottered this one, didn't you?"

Harry, as per usual, sent a flare of pleasure along his connection to the Mark, but rather than the usual response, Tibbles felt the harsh sensation of something similar to portkey travel and he disappeared from the Headmaster's office. Only to realize, that he had turned into the former Dark Mark tattoo on his twin's body.

The still standing Draco knew immediately what had happened and lifted up his sleeve. There, on his arm, was a perfect tattoo of himself. "Great Merlin!"

Harry looked over at Albus and acted like he meant to do that. Albus wasn't buying it.

The two others went to inspect the tattoo and saw a slightly disoriented, but apparently alive magical tattoo of Draco, on Draco. "Can Tibbles, communicate with you Draco?"

And through his connection, Harry heard 'Screw you, Potter.' Harry smiled. "Well, Tibbles can communicate with me at least."

Draco nodded, "Yeah, I can hear him in my head."

Harry asked, "Can you make him corporeal on your own?"

Draco squinted his face and was trying with all his magic to do just that. The voice in his head warning him that if he pushed any harder he was going to pass gas, made Draco stop and shake his head.

Harry sent a burst of magic down the link, and once again, Tibbles seemed to jump out of Draco's body, and there were two identical Draco Malfoy's in the room. Harry summarized the situation and said, "Well, this is definitely interesting."

Albus just laughed. "Oh Harry."

Tibbles and Draco were eyeing each other up and down.

Harry made a face. "Tibbles, you realize that since you are the Mark, I can hear everything you're thinking."

Tibbles and Draco both blushed deeply.

Albus quirked his mouth in a smile. "Now Harry, a bitter, sarcastic, angry ass seems like a much more pleasing pet reform project, doesn't it?"

Harry grumbled and shook his head, while Draco and Tibbles seemed to be lost in each other's eyes. "Albus, do you think the connection would be strengthened if the two separate pieces of his soul became soul-bonded?"

Albus briefly considered it. "Well, of course, their 'souls' would be extremely compatible, but the only way for them to bond would be if they are in... love... and... they... would have to... consummate... oh lord, that's just not right."

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

Harry and Albus walked into the staff room, neither in the mood to discuss the particulars of what had just happened.

Harry saw Hermione sitting there reading, and said, "Well, Draco is no longer single."

Hermione raised an eyebrow.

Albus chuckled and said, "He's double."

Harry groaned knowing he had set that one up perfectly.

Hermione curiously asked, "Do I even want to know?"

Harry replied, "Well, who do you know would be pretty enough, arrogant enough, rich enough, have blood pure enough, and would be so far off the deep end that dating Draco Malfoy would sound like a good idea to them?"

Hermione thought about it, and finally shook her head. "I can't think of any wizard or witch that meets those criteria and hasn't erased his own memory and been committed to St. Mungo's."

Harry shrugged. "It's pretty obvious when you think about it. There's only one person good enough for Draco."

"Oh just tell me already!" Hermione huffed.

Harry smirked. "Draco."

Hermione was about to yell at Harry and paused to think about it. "Oh," she whispered. "Oh dear."

"Exactly," Harry explained with a nod.

Hermione was making some painful faces, which were terribly amusing to Albus. Finally she asked, "So there's two of him out there now?"

Harry lifted his hand and concentrated for a second before shaking his head and answering. "Nope, there's just the one right now."

Hermione looked at Harry oddly.

Harry's eyes went wide with surprise. "Oh good lord. Never mind. There's two of him again."

"Harry," Hermione sighed and rested her face in her hands. "Are you perverting nature again?"

"This one wasn't me!" Harry pleaded. "Even Albus agreed this was the best solution."

Hermione looked at Albus who was smiling merrily. "I agreed with our intentions. The end result was nowhere near anything what we were expecting at all. But if there's occasionally two Draco's running around, well, so be it. As long as I'm not the one who can't help but listen in on their twisted, perverse lifestyle."

Harry groaned again and sank down into his chair.

Hermione smirked. "So... two Draco's? Maybe a little competition to get between you and the Patil twins?"

Harry made a pained face. "I'm pretty sure they have just a tad too much vagina for him." Harry smiled and tilted his head. "And come to think of it, he and Tibbles may not have enough penis for the twins either."

Hermione gacked and left the room muttering about disgusting childish boys, though Harry would swear he saw her smiling and blushing.

Albus rolled his eyes but was still quite pleased with this evening's outcome.

“Why are you so happy, Albus?” Harry finally asked.

Albus was smiling brightly, his eyes were twinkling, and he replied, “I sometimes miss seeing just how deviant simple things can become around you, Harry. That, and I think I’m entitled to a bit of schadenfreude after those boils and being made a muggle and being hit by lightning and dropping Minnie on me and-”

“Oh shush, child,” Harry frustratingly scolded.

“Luna,” Harry asked. “Am I whore?”

Luna looked down at the naked man resting his head on her belly. “Depends on your definition of whore.”

Harry considered. “How about the general common definition?”

Luna lay back and looked at the ceiling. “By that definition, then, yes. You’re a whore.”

Harry asked, “What about your definition?”

Luna concurred. “Yup.”

Harry wondered. “What about my parents or Sirius?”

Luna agreed. “Oh most certainly. You’re a whore, through and through.”

Harry sat there pensively enjoying the warmth her belly provided. “I think I’m okay with that.”

Luna smiled. “That’s good. I wouldn’t want to lose my favorite one-eyed trouser snake to some wicked traditionalist concepts of love.”

“You ever think I’ll fall in love?” Harry asked.

Luna replied. “Are you so sure you haven’t already?”

Harry thought about it. "Nope. No clue. For all I know I could be 'in love' with a dozen people right now."

"A dozen?" Luna asked.

"Tonks, Ginny, Padma, Parvati, Hermione, Susan, Hannah, Daphne, Tracey, Hestia, Milla, and of course, you Luna." Harry rattled off in a single breath.

"Wow," Luna responded. "You are a whore. And you might be in love."

Harry sighed.

"Does it matter whether you can officially claim either title: whore or love?" Luna asked.

Harry thought about it and realized, "No. It doesn't."

Luna smiled. "Good. Because I love you being my whore."

Harry exhaled with relief and rolled over to face Luna. "Why can't all girls be as smart, intuitive, and logical as you, Luna?"

Luna sighed. "Woman's Intuition."

Harry raised an eyebrow.

Luna explained. "It's our secret way of saying we're all nutters."

Harry nodded his head and agreed.

"Well, Harry, it's almost seven." Luna stated.

Harry sighed.

Luna added. "That was me reminding you of your date with Tonks."



“Oh crap! I got to go.” Harry exclaimed jumping up. He looked at the cute little naked blonde laying there. “Man, you’re classy! Thanks, Luna.” Harry kissed her goodbye before disappearing with a pop.

Luna lay there for a moment, thinking. She happily declared to the empty room, “Whores are awesome.”

“Hey Tonks, how’s it shaking?” Harry greeted.

“Like a loose goose in my juicy caboose.” Tonks smiled and hugged him. “And now you can stop staring at my bum.”

“Sorry,” Harry apologized. “But you mentioned your juicy caboose. It’s like a woman saying, ‘Don’t look at my breasts.’ If you weren’t before, you definitely will after that statement.”

“Yeah, yeah. I’m just joking with you anyway.” Tonks waved off his apology. “So what’s the plan for tonight? Dinner? Muggle movie? Wild monkey sex?”

“I was thinking a definite yes to dinner, as I’m pretty hungry. After that, it’s up to you.”

“Let’s play it by ear. I think I’m in the mood for some pizza.”

The couple was relaxing at dinner, engaging in light conversation. “So there’s Bill Weasley and my dad trapped in the muggle entrance to the Ministry of Magic and...”

Harry chuckled. “Let me guess: and the phone booth disappeared with both of them in it as they jumped through time?”

Tonks’ eyes were wide. “How’d you know?”

Harry snickered.

Tonks was insistent. “How on earth did you know that?”

Harry could tell Tonks was clueless. “Did they describe their adventure through time?”

Tonks immediately replied, "Dad said it was excellent!"

"Did they bring back any proof," Harry asked doing his best not to laugh in Tonks' face. "Or could this all just be some bogus journey?"

Tonks thought about it and was shaking her head. "I don't remember any proof. Though my Dad certainly found something extremely humorous about the situation."

Harry couldn't take it and began laughing loudly. He really needed to meet Ted Tonks. He sounded like a pretty fun guy.

"I'm sorry Tonks. Just was remembering a muggle movie." Harry explained. "I'm not laughing at you. I'm laughing with you." Harry was snickering severely. "It's just that you don't get the joke."

Tonks frowned at Harry. She threatened, "Do you want me to make a scene?"

Harry's chuckles ceased immediately. "No. I'm good. I'll be nice. I promise."

Tonks smiled. Make one thoroughly embarrassing scene and just carry the threat of more. Unsurprisingly, the appearance of a pregnant thirteen year old dinner date makes Harry nervous. "So anyways, while I've got you behaving, want to talk to me about whatever's been bothering you?"

Harry looked at Tonks curiously.

"Don't think I haven't noticed you occasionally stare off into space, thinking something not particularly happy." Tonks explained. "I'm trying to not take it personally."

Harry smiled slightly at Tonks. "Definitely, don't take it personally. I've just been... thinking some."

"About what?" Tonks softly inquired.

Harry sighed. "About the fairness of dating several people at the same time."

Tonks frowned. "Have you ever been dishonest with any of the people? Or misled them into thinking you weren't dating others?"

Harry shook his head vehemently. "No way. I don't exactly name them all off a list, but I make it clear I am casually involved with others in the same manner as them."

Tonks shrugged. "Then what you're doing is completely fair."

"Is it?" Harry asked. "I mean I know I have absolutely no right to ask them not to see other people, but none of them are, as far as I know. And I like that they're not seeing other people. If they were, then my opinion of them could potentially change. I'm not saying I'd stop liking them, or even that I'd like them less. But it'd be hard for my opinion of them not to be influenced by their taste in other guys. It's just, I'm dating several of them, and they are all just dating one person: me. Is that fair?"

Tonks considered it. "Well, okay, when you put it like that, it does sound like a bit of a bum deal." Tonks shook her head. "But as long as you're being honest about it, you're being as fair as you possibly can. We're the ones loony enough to still be willing to date you."

Harry felt better hearing the same arguments that he was using to try and convince himself. He smiled shyly. "Thanks Tonks."

Tonks smiled back. "I know how important the concept of family is to you, but don't do anything you're not ready for." Tonks could see Harry's mind was in the gutter after that comment and continued. "Harry, you're going to turn twenty-two in a few months. Would you rather date just one person and be completely devoted and in love?"

Harry immediately replied. "No, I wouldn't. You're right. I am still just a kid. And I consider all of you a part of my own twisted family already. 'Sisters with benefits' sounds pretty horrifying, but you get the idea."

Tonks' curious look was a bit disquieting. "Then stop thinking about it. Date all of us. Continue being honest with all of us, and for Merlin's sake don't deny us our Elixir of Life! Tonky needs her medicine."

Harry chuckled. "I am twenty-one, Tonky. I do have some priorities."

Idle conversation continued until the pair elected to skip any other plans and just do their monkey impressions back at the castle.

'Oh dear god, what have I done?' Tonks thought frantically. 'What the hell happened? Oh god. Oh god.'

'Hermione is going to skin me,' she thought.

Tonks paled even more. 'Harry won't like me anymore.'

'Think! Think! Think!' Tonks pleaded. 'We had a nice dinner. Harry seemed more mature and open. Was it really Harry? Stop! Of course it was. Ran into Nicholas and Hermione. Harry and Nicholas talked about something. Went back to the DADA office. The four of us drank. Drank a lot. Drank some more. Hermione and Nicholas left. Or was it Harry? Stop! It was Nicholas. Played some of the old, 'Guess who I am and where I'm going to touch you?' And last I remember going to sleep, I looked like Hermione, but with better breasts, and Harry looked like... he looked like... yeah, he looked like Salazar Slytherin.' Tonks recollected.

'So how on earth am I waking up next to Nicholas Flamel?' Tonks asked herself. 'I always half-suspected he was a metamorphmagus and this looks like the truth. In sleep you revert to your natural form. And he definitely wasn't Nicholas when he fell asleep.'

'No, this is crazy! This is some stupid prank of Harry's. Some joke.' Tonks argued with herself. 'And... ahh crud. I recognize my teeth marks on his bum and his... ooooh sorry. Didn't mean to draw blood. Oh lordy. What the heck happened. I can't be here. We'll just pretend nothing happened. I'll find out what Harry last remembers and we'll never need to think this happened.'

'Oh geez, where are my clothes?' Tonks panicked. 'Duh. Am I witch or not?'

Tonks quietly whispered, "Accio panties!"

Tonks grabbed the strangely warm panties flying at her, hurriedly got dressed, and quietly made her way back to her quarters.

Tonks walked into the staff room, heading towards the conversation she could hear.

"No idea. She must have left in the night and was already back at her quarters." Harry said.

Hermione spotted Tonks entering and pointed. "There she is. Hey Tonks, let me guess: Your old regular friend dropped by and you needed to get back to your rooms?"

"Regular? I've never slept with him before!" Tonks paled and scratched her itchy underwear.

"I meant you got your period." Hermione frowned. "What are you talking about?"

"Nothing!" Tonks yelled back. "Stop harassing me!" She exclaimed and stomped out of the staff room.

"Well, that was different." Harry observed.

Hermione shook her head thinking. "You sure you didn't hurt her last night?"

Harry replied negatively. "If anyone got hurt, it was me. But it was one of those good hurts."

Hermione rolled her eyes. "I meant emotionally, you pervert."

"Oh." Harry retorted. "Naw, I don't think so. I was actually a bit more open and honest than usual at dinner, and she was helping me emotionally. After that it was just the four of us drinking here. My memories a bit hazy, but I don't think she was hurt. I mean she was plenty happy once you and Nicholas left. And that's 'plenty' with a capital P. Big P-ness sorts of happy."

Hermione blushed. "Yes, yes. I get your point loud and clear."

"I don't talk in my sleep, do I?" Harry asked.

"Not to my knowledge. Do you?" Hermione replied.

Harry shook his head. "Don't think I ever have. Just trying to figure out... oh... oh dear. You don't think Tonks knows, does she?"

"About nnnngggghhh?" Hermione finished as Tonks was unsubtly peeking back into the staff room.

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Anything I should know about Tonky?"

"No!" Tonks insisted frantically. "Nothing you should be bothered with."

Harry was far from convinced but wasn't going to press the matter. "Well then, are waiting for me to leave to talk to Hermione? Or for Hermione to leave so you can talk to me?" Harry asked diplomatically.

"Err..." Tonks paused. "I was going to ask Hermione how I could get a hold of Nicholas."

Harry smiled, "I might be able to help you with that."

"Hello honey," Nicholas said coming up behind a completely unsuspecting Tonks.

Tonks jumped back, "Don't you call me that!"

Nicholas who was now in the process of kissing Hermione on the cheek, paused and looked at Tonks. "Okay." He looked at Harry and then back at Tonks. "I won't call you that."

Harry, Hermione, and Nicholas were all standing there watching Tonks curiously. She seemed particularly meek and could be seen gulping. The three others all looked at each other briefly and said nothing. They turned their attention back to Tonks.

Nicholas broke the silence and watching Tonks carefully, asked, "How are you doing this morning?"

"Not too bloody well!" Tonks yelled at him.

Harry, Hermione, and Nicholas all looked at each other a bit shocked.

"Err... would you like a hangover potion?" Nicholas suggested.

Tonks could not believe the audacity of the man. Her emotions wavered before settling on anger. "How many times do I have to tell you to stop harassing me!" Tonks exclaimed and stormed out of the staff room.

Nicholas pointlessly answered, "Once should do it."

Hermione smacked Nicholas upside the head. "What the dibbity is going on?"

Nicholas and Harry looked at each other. They answered in unison. "We don't know."

Harry continued, "He's only a couple minutes older than me."

Nicholas nodded and smiled at Hermione. "But I think you might find out soon."

Hermione was about to retort when Tonks stuck her head back in the staff room. "Hermione," Tonks said with a forced calm. "We need to talk. Somewhere private. Away from these all too eager to eavesdrop, Neanderthal men."

Harry and Nicholas both looked at each other curiously, while Hermione marched out of the staff room with determination. Hermione didn't know what was going on, and she hated that more than toast.

## CHAPTER TWENTY

Nicholas turned to Harry, "Well, you need to go out the door, around the corner and go back five minutes to become me."

Harry nodded and agreed grumbling to himself. "I should go back to-"

Nicholas was shaking his head and interrupted. "I know you're tempted to go way back and try to fix this, but I'd like to add that the further you go back, the further from the answers you get. It's why I'm just from five minutes ago."

"Fine," Harry frustratingly said.

Nicholas smiled, "And I suppose I should remind myself we need to contact the media and introduce the idea of Dementor blood with a public demonstration the day before the Hogwarts Express leaves."

Harry waved at his five minute older self. "Yeah, yeah, yeah." He left the room to walk around the corner and go back in time knowing he would walk in and surprise Tonks. "Stupid cheeky bugger." He called his other self.

Nicholas was now alone and began thinking about whether to just write a press release or to do an interview.

Hermione came barreling into the staff room. "Nicholas!" She yelled smacking him on his arm. "You idiot! Tonks woke up and you were in Nicholas Flamel's form. And since metamorphmagi supposedly fall into their natural form when relaxed..."

"She thinks she slept with Nicholas!" Nicholas slapped his forehead and said with a slightly dawning horror.

"Exactly." Hermione exclaimed in agreement. "Hurry! Take us to the Great Hall before Tonks does something she's going to regret. I tried to explain it to her, but all I could say was nnnnnnggggghhh and I think she was drawing some inaccurate conclusions." Hermione paused.



“Come to think of it, running away from her to come get you probably won’t look too good either.”

Nicholas held onto Hermione and they both melted into the floor. They appeared just inside the closed doors of the Great Hall. Twenty feet in front of them, was Tonks with her back to them, as she addressed a significant amount of the student body and staff. “That’s right! Nicholas Flamel tricked me into sleeping with him!”

“Miss Tonks,” Nicholas interrupted.

“You stay back,” Tonks exclaimed whipping around, pointing her wand at him.

“You’ve misunderstood. I haven’t slept with you,” Nicholas pleaded, slowly stepping towards Tonks. “You know Harry’s abilities, and his penchant for mischief.”

Tonks kept her wand trained on him as he moved closer, but she said nothing in response. Once Nicholas took another small step forward, he felt his body had triggered a ward, and before he knew what happened, there in front of the school was the naked, ancient but surprisingly tone body of Nicholas Flamel. A few flashbulbs from cameras went off around the room featuring a panicked wide-eyed former Defense professor.

Tonks’ eyes looked victorious. “Ah-ha! See! I was right! Those are my teeth marks, right there! I was supposed to be biting Harry!”

Nicholas quickly noticed there were a number of people slack-jawed at both the nude old guy, and the odd shape and color of the bruising. “No, you’re still misunderstanding...”

“Oh my god!” Tonks yelled. “You killed Harry Potter and have assumed his life! Of course!”

Nicholas had by now conjured a robe and quickly put it on. He responded smartly with, “Err... what?”

“That’s why you’ve been bewitching Hermione!” Tonks exclaimed. “Because she knew the truth that you had killed Harry Potter! And you’ve been taking advantage of her too!”

Hermione immediately jumped in and explained with a smile, “Nnnnnrrrrrgggiggity!”

Nicholas saw all the scared, and even worse sad and heartbroken looks on the silent student’s faces. A few first years had tears in their eyes. He wasn’t sure what to do right now and was wondering when a future double might show up and save him. He resignedly said, “I haven’t killed anyone, least of all Harry Potter.”

“So you admit to tricking me into sleeping with you?” Tonks replied. “You know some people call that rape!”

“No Tonks!” Nicholas pleaded. “I... I... oh hell, I am Harry Potter.” He explained as he metamorphed into his natural form.

Tonks’ eyes gleamed again. “Then you killed Nicholas Flamel! And you’ve assumed his life!”

Harry desperately looked up towards the staff table and saw the Headmaster’s eyes twinkling like supernovas. “Oh god dammit Tonks! No one was killed. Nicholas Flamel has never been a real person, alright! He’s a piece of fiction, okay! Someone just made him up 600 some odd years ago and passed down the secret to the next person who pretends to be him. I’m the latest and now probably the last.”

Tonks held her wand arm firm and narrowed her eyes. “That’s exactly what someone who killed him would say.”

Harry grunted in frustration. He saw the looks of complete confusion and disappointment on almost all of the student body. Seeing their hero, or even heroes, dressed down into such meager deceptions. Harry felt broken and resigned. He meekly asked, “Why Tonks? Why are you doing this?”

Tonks dropped her arm, stood up straight and smiled. "Well because it's been way too long since someone pulled a proper prank on you."

Harry looked up and saw Tonks smiling cheekily at him. He looked around the room and watched the illusion of the Great Hall and all the students and staff disappear and meld into the familiar look of the old DA classroom in the Room of Requirement. He realized the only person in the room besides Tonks and him, was a shaking with silent laughter Hermione. "Phew." Harry exhaled clutching his heart and fell in a seat that appeared just behind him. He began laughing in relief. "Oh sweet Merlin."

Tonks saw Harry sag with relief and thrust her arms in the air. "I rule!"

Harry was shaking his head. "Damn Tonks, that was horrible and mean. Good one."

Tonks smiled cheekily, "Yeah well, it wasn't so much me, as it was someone was still peeved at you for shutting her down and turning off her magic."

Harry chuckled and rubbed his hand on the floor. "I'm sorry honey." He said addressing the no doubt eavesdropping castle. Harry was shaking his head. "I can't believe you girls would do this to me."

Hermione slung her arm over Tonks shoulders and the two girls broke into a few choruses of 'We are the champions' complete with "No time for Potters 'cause we are the champions of the world."

Harry looked curiously at Tonks, "How'd you even communicate with Hogwarts? I would've thought you'd need to be Headmaster, an heir to a founder, or have some sort of artifact, like the Sword of Gryffindor."

Tonks shrugged. "Just heard her voice in my head."

Harry's eyes were closed as he seemed to be having a telepathic conversation with Hogwarts. The two girls saw Harry's jaw drop a bit in surprise just before letting out a loud laugh. Tonks was looking at him curiously waiting for an explanation. Finally Harry asked Tonks,

“Do you want me to say it out loud, or do you want an itchy crotch so you can get an answer with some privacy?”

Tonks frowned. “I’m not sure I like the sound of either of those options, but I had the itchy crotch earlier and it was pretty uncomfortable, so just tell us already.”

Harry smiled. “You know how I said you’d need an artifact? Well you’re wearing a ten million galleon, thousand year old artifact that still carries a parsel jinx from Salazar himself.”

Hermione snapped her head towards Tonks, who immediately took a look down her robes at the grandma panties she had unintentionally put on this morning. “I thought these things felt warm.”

Hermione looked a bit disgusted. “You’re wearing Helga Hufflepuff’s old undies?”

Tonks shrugged. “Guess so. What parsel jinx was it?”

Harry smirked. “That was the itching. According to Hogwarts, there’s a trigger in the staff room entrance, where every seventh time through the door it activates. Apparently when it was triggered you were able to communicate with Hogwarts. I’m guessing that happened the second time you stormed out of the staff room?”

Tonks nodded and was absentmindedly scratching herself.

Harry nodded. “And when you countered and blocked out the itching you disconnected yourself from Hogwarts. But she’s the one who tricked me into thinking I was in the Great Hall. Cheeky box of rocks.”

This was apparently not the best way to impress the castle as Harry fell halfway through the floor and was sealed in the stone from just above his wrists and bellybutton. Before Harry could either make matters worse or sweet talk the castle, Dobby appeared with a pop. He walked around his Master and stood back to back. He slid his hand across the top of his ears and measured his height as compared to his master. He was now a few centimeters taller than his master. He shook his head in shame. “You know Potty, there’s

already an elf named Shorty.” And with a wink and a pop Dobby disappeared, his cheek work here done.

Hermione smiled again interrupting Harry from saying anything. She intoned in a deep voice, “And the student becomes the teacher.”

Harry was feeling pretty shell-shocked by now. “Alright. That’s it. I’m declaring an all-out prank war on the next person who messes with me.” And just like that, the ground spit up Harry and he was standing normally on solid ground. “Thank you sweetie. I probably deserved that but don’t think I won’t prank you back if you do it again.”

Harry was hearing a response in his head. He smirked and said aloud, “Oh really? Because Ron was telling me I should paint the whole castle Chudley Cannons orange.”

The girls’ were a bit startled to feel the Room of Requirement gasp in outrage.

“Come on Harry, that wasn’t fair!” Tonks complained.

“You accepted it Tonks.” Harry disagreed. “Magic seems to have decided it was fair.”

“You said it was protection from piranhas!”

“And why are you so sure it wasn’t protection from piranhas?” Harry asked.

“Unless there are magical piranhas with mind control techniques, the effects of that spell shouldn’t be in my head.” Tonks explained. “I can feel magic that affects the mind, and that purple thing passed straight through my Occlumency shields.”

“It was a necessary secrecy spell.” Harry retorted. “I can’t just let everyone know about me if I can help it.”

“But it’s not fair that you tricked me into it.” Tonks whined.

Harry raised an eyebrow. "If it's fair that you tricked me into revealing the information, then I think I'm perfectly within my rights to trick you into keeping it secret."

Tonks paused. "Wait. What did you reveal?"

Harry paused and looked at her.

"Hold on," Tonks said. "You mean that spiel about Nicholas being made up was true?"

Harry looked at Tonks incredulously.

"It is? It is!" Tonks yelled. "But, I mean... oh come on. That's crazy. That can't be true."

Harry was chuckling to himself now. "Perhaps I didn't need the knowledge suppression hex as much as I thought I did."

"That was a knowledge suppression!" Tonks exclaimed. "Those are classified as Dark and Restricted! You're certainly not allowed to cast that."

"Is that so?" Harry smirked. "And just how do you plan on reporting this?"

Tonks thought about it. "Crap. What an unfair hex."

Harry shrugged.

"So really? Nicholas and Harry? I mean that's like double-fisted nuts... over the rainbow bonkers... legitimately beyond even Albus-level readings of pure unadulterated kookiness." Tonks paused and added, "And you were leading the search for yourself!" She seemed to just remember something, "And you stunned me and left hanging there in the room, pretending to be me! No wonder you claimed there were only three people in the room! There really were!"

Harry smiled. "I try."

Tonks huffed. "Stupid hex. Wait, so who else knows this?"

Harry was counting them off his fingers. "Just Albus, Hermione, Severus, and Draco."

"What!" Tonks jumped up enraged. "You let Snivelly and the ferret know before me!"

"It wasn't like that. I mean they... oh bloody hell." Harry recognized the look in Tonks' eye and high-tailed it out of there quickly. She'd already started sending conjured rusty sharp objects at his retreating back.

"Heya, Uncle Oldie!" Simon exclaimed.

Albus sighed. "Good morning, Simon. And isn't Uncle Albie more fun to say than Uncle Oldie?"

Simon shook his head. "No, sir. It's not even a little bit more fun. In fact I'd probably say it's less fun."

Albus chuckled. "It's hard to disagree with that logic. So how has your morning been?"

"Great!" Simon cheered. "I pulled off my first prank!"

Harry cleared his throat loudly. "Simon. Pranks should not be confessed to lead Administrators. It's bad form."

Albus frowned. "I seem to remember getting a promise from someone that they wouldn't help with any childish pranks."

Harry nodded. "And even though it broke Simon's fragile little heart, I have and will continue to honor that promise."

Simon nodded. "Yeah. But he got Uncle Nicky to help me!"

Albus snapped his head towards Harry.

Harry snickered and pointed out. "Simon. Accomplices too, should not be freely given to lead Administrators. It gets them in trouble and makes it harder for them to help you next time."

Simon turned to Albus and with a completely straight face said, "Uncle Nicky didn't do nuffin."

Albus could only laugh. "So this prank Uncle Nicky didn't do nuffin on, what was it?"

Simon smiled. "I came up with it all on my ownsome! And together me and Uncle Nic-... I mean I didn't do nuffin, but whoever did this prank cast a bunch of magic all over all the bathrooms in the school."

Albus took off his glasses and rubbed the bridge of his nose. "Please tell me they're not all under the Fidelius again."

Harry whistled appreciatively. "How come I never thought of doing that?"

Albus sighed. "Well it's been done, so forget it. And please, continue Simon. This prank that neither you nor Uncle Nicky had anything to do with. What sorts of danger await me in the restroom?"

Simon was giggling happily. "Well it depends on what you're doing there. If it's a number one, it looks bright red. Like cherry-flavored blood or bloody cherry juice. And if it's a number two, it's clear blue water with goldfish and snakes."

Albus raised an eyebrow slightly impressed.

"And the snakes eat the goldfish!" Simon excitedly yelled.

"I think I may have to take a look at that." Albus said as he got up and left the room.

Simon was smiling and then giggled. "He went to poo."



Harry tried not to laugh or encourage potty mouthed childish behavior, but unsurprisingly it was a doomed effort for the young man. He was chuckling with Simon.

Simon asked, "Hey Uncle Poncy?"

Harry put down the papers he was grading and sat back looking at the serious sounding young boy. "Yes, Simon?"

"Why don't you have a wife?"

Harry smiled. "I think I'm still too young for a wife."

"Oh." Simon said deflatedly. "Cause Aunt Mommy said you had several people in obedience training to become your wife."

"Aunt Mommy?" Harry asked.

"Yeah, Aunt Mommy said I could still call her Aunt Minnie, or Mom if I wanted to but that she understood if I didn't want to call her Mom yet and that maybe with time I would want to call her Mom, so I made her pretty happy calling her Aunt Mommy because I don't know if I want to call her Mom." Simon took a breath. "Yet."

"I think that sounds like a nice middle-ground for you." Harry replied. "And Aunt Mommy tricked you saying people were in obedience training for me. But I am dating a few people, just not really thinking about a wife yet."

"Yeah, Aunt Mommy said Aunt Ginny and Aunt Tonky were both in training. But I got to tell you, Uncle Poncy, Ginny Potter sounds goofy, but Honky Potter, Honky Potter sounds like the name of a good woman."

Harry chuckled. "In fairness, I should mention Aunt Tonky's real first name is Nymphadora."

"Nih- Nih- Nihm... fedora Potter?" Simon repeated. "On second thought, don't kick Aunt Ginny out of training just yet."

Harry smiled. "Alright I won't. Though I would definitely agree with you Honky Potter does sound like the name of a good woman."

Simon went back to his drawings and Harry went back to grading his papers. He was briefly interrupted by the arrival of Hedwig carrying The Daily Prophet. Today, the beginnings of their findings would be going public.

### Potter and Flamel's Research Project: Dementor Blood

Harry Potter and Nicholas Flamel are finally breaking the silence they've been keeping on their massive research project. Similar to the work Flamel did with Albus Dumbledore on discovering the twelve uses for Dragon's blood, Potter and Flamel have been researching and documenting all the capabilities of the blood of Dementors. So little is known of Dementors that previous to this, no one even knew Dementors had blood.

"The majority of the discoveries include introducing new ways to manipulate time and space and even simple magic's interactions with time and space." Potter explained. It has also come out that the explosion at Hogwarts that produced a nullification field more than four miles in diameter for two full days was a completely unintentional and totally accidental test for the limits of the power of Dementor Blood. Potter stated, "We will be sharing our complete findings with the Department of Mysteries, and shortly thereafter we will publish our thesis and eventually a book. But until that time, one of the most revolutionary uses for Dementor Blood will be on display at the duel." The duel Potter is referring to is an exhibition match featuring as yet unidentified combatants. It is to take place 3:00 PM June 29th, the last full day of school, at the Quidditch Pitch on Hogwarts grounds. There is a similar veil of secrecy over this coming duel, but Nicholas Flamel explains, "I guarantee this will be unlike any duel anyone has ever seen. And will very possibly be a first step to a complete revolution of our way of life." Both Potter and Flamel were adamant that this duel was not something to be missed and personally invited all major media outlets.

When prompted to be more specific or to hint at other uses for Dementor's Blood, Potter was extremely tight-lipped. Flamel, being a

bit more open, added, “Sadly we could find no use at all for Dementor Blood as an over cleaner of any sort. But in some dishes it is a delicious seasoning for cooking.”

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

It was the last full day of the school year. There were a few final projects and presentations in morning classes, the last classes of the year. All students had finished their papers and taken their final tests. All except for twelve brave young souls. It was these twelve students, who were sitting in the Defense classroom with their most favoritest Professor ever, Professor Potter. Though in fairness, as first years, they didn't get to have Professor Flamel last year, like everyone else.

Three students from each house. These were the best of the best. Well, more likely these were the twelve who got permission slips signed by their parents. "Alright gentlemen and gentleladies, this duel is going to be the basis for your final grade. Whether you win or lose, whether you get taken down immediately, or strike down your foe quickly and decisively will not affect your grade. Your grade will be on your ability to stand before adversity. To show off your dueling skills and put in your best effort. You do your best out there, you show me what you can do and every one of you will get an Outstanding."

Harry stood up and was pacing with his hands behind his back, like a general addressing his troops. "I have intentionally kept the details of the duel from you. You will not be dueling each other as you may have anticipated. In actuality, the twelve of you will be working together, all at the same time dueling one single adult man. Do not let his size and age intimidate you. I won't lie to you. I have personally tutored the man for well over an hour and a half." Harry explained with a somber serious face.

First year Hufflepuff Samantha Fickersly began giggling. "An hour and a half?"

Harry nodded. "I said well over an hour and a half, but yes it was less than two hours."

The class began to relax and momentarily stopped picturing the ultimate warrior trainee to Harry Potter. Someone extremely powerful magically and with the strength and stamina of a greek God. Little did

they know, that what they had been picturing was pretty much the exact opposite of what they were getting.

Harry smiled and said. "I'm glad to see you realize I've been tutoring you all for a lot longer than him. I wouldn't have asked you all to do this if I didn't believe in you. Truthfully, I really don't know who is more likely to emerge victorious. You may win, you may not, but I promise you, this duel will go down in history."

The twelve first years all exchanged wary looks before nodding resolutely.

"Thank you all for coming." Harry addressed the large crowds from his podium. "My partner, Nicholas Flamel and I have been experimenting heavily in the capabilities and limitations of stored magic existing outside of time and space, and establishing triggers to release that magic. The implications of these discoveries, that are only possible with the use of Dementor's blood, are staggering."

Harry continued and pulled out a small firearm. Most of the crowd remained silent, though there were a few gasps. "I can see a very select few of you recognize what this appears like. It is by all appearances a muggle firearm, and were more of you familiar with them, you would most likely be horrified at its capabilities. They fire bullets, small shaped pieces of metal at extremely high-speed that will tear through the flesh of a human like a hot knife through butter. Among muggles, if you get shot by one of these, there is a high probability it will kill you. Firearms, or guns, are extremely destructive and dangerous."

Harry lifted it higher in the air to show most people what it looked like. "This is not a muggle gun though. This is a shell that I have enchanted and imbued with some of the storage capabilities possible through a specially constructed subspace. Most guns have an extremely loud retort when they fire, and are limited by the number of bullets they hold, until you reload it. This has no bullets, but instead has over ten thousand above average strength stunning spells."

Harry spotted Rita Skeeter, took aim, and fired. Rita's eyes were wide and she wasn't ready. The spell smacked her between the eyes and she slumped into unconsciousness. "Thank you Miss Skeeter for

demonstrating so capably.” Harry happily stated to the unconscious woman. “It’s that easy to use. You pull the trigger and out shoots a spell just the same as if you aimed your wand and incanted Stupefy.” Harry saw several confused faces. “I can see why you’re curious as to the point of a device like this,” Harry said waving the gun in the air. “Well, the real beauty of it is that anyone can use it. Children who cannot legally use magic, or who aren’t skilled enough to cast a Stunning spell with the strength of an adult could use one of these.” Harry paused and added, “Squibs could pull the trigger just as easily as any adult wizard could.” Before the masses could wrap their mind around that one, Harry immediately continued, “But this is a very simple example, and now we will see a slightly more advanced one. Rather than pulling a trigger, the stored spells can be released through the use of a word and stored within rings inside a wooden chute. Something far more intuitive to us as we incant words to cast spells through wands. So, here, for you, I would like to introduce the combatants of a duel that will change the way you think of magic.”

Harry smiled cheekily, “I would like you all to give a healthy round of applause for our Hogwarts representatives: Elizabeth Burkley, Derek Chance, Cyrus Evers, Samantha Fickersly, Jason Myers, David Ruppert, Sarah Silver, James Simpleton, Ginny Tallywick, Evan Tinker, Augustus Wells, and Zoe Zipperdiddle.”

The crowd politely applauded as the extremely nervous youngsters all came out from behind the curtains and stood on the dueling area that had been set up.

“Yes, for those of you unfamiliar with these bright young students, they are all on the brink of finishing their first year here at Hogwarts.” Harry explained happily. “And yes, they will be receiving credit for this duel.”

Harry took a deep breath and smiled. “These twelve students will be working together, and representing Hogwarts. Their challenger is a single person I would like to introduce to you all now. Please give a warm welcome to my muggle cousin, Dudley Dursley!”

Dudley, and his massive mistake-me-for-a-whale body, came strutting out from the curtains behind Harry. The crowd was sitting there shocked and not a word was being said.

Harry triggered a special little spell he had stored, and it sounded like the crowds had begun cheering and clapping. Dudley was eating it up clapping his hands together up in the air on his right side, and then his left, always a fan of being in the spotlight. The rousing applause was building Dudley's confidence, and apparently the sight of all those in attendance staring at him silently with their jaws open stupidly, did nothing to deter him.

Harry let his fake applause settle down, and continued. "Yes, it is true, Dudley here is about as muggle as they come, and wouldn't even be at Hogwarts if I didn't exclude him from the notice-me-not and muggle-repelling wards. This duel will be to unconsciousness, and it will be a completely magical duel. Wands only, no knives, daggers, swords, or quarterstaffs. The twelve first years versus my tubby muggle cousin."

"Oi!" Dudley yelled. "I'm big-boned!"

Harry agreed. "Excuse me, I meant my big-boned tubby muggle cousin."

Dudley rolled his eyes though he was smiling.

The crowd was still sitting there in shock. A number of flashes from photographers were going off, but no one had begun ranting inappropriately or asking questions yet.

"Combatants, to your sides, please." Harry intoned. He was impressed to see the twelve first years had apparently agreed on an order and were standing in two rows of six.

"Hogwarts contingent, are you ready?"

"Yes, sir!" They yelled in unison, all of them holding their wands up in front of their faces. Harry had to stop himself from chuckling.

“Dudley, are you ready?”

Dudley pulled out his thick brown stick. “Oh yeah. Bring it on, baby!”

Some of the first years looked a little scared.

Harry looked left and right, made sure the charms protecting the dueling area were still secure and yelled, “Begin!”

Immediately, all six first years in the front row cast spells. A couple petrifications, a couple tripping jinxes, and two stunners. None of the students were vastly proficient at magic considering they were twelve years old, so this unified effort was impressive.

Dudley saw the magic heading his way and shook his stick fervently. “Shield!” He yelled while wiggling his stick. A shield erupted around him and deflected all the spells.

The first years looked amazed at the impressive shield Dudley was holding up. They certainly couldn’t cast one that big or that would block all those spells. They hadn’t even reacted when Dudley began snapping his stick like a whip and yelling, “Stun! Stun! Stun! Stun! Stun! Stun! Stun!” over and over again until he cast nearly fifty in the span of a minute. The first years squealed and scattered around wildly under the onslaught. Five of their members were down. One of the first years, Ginny Tallywick, cast Ennervate on her classmate and saw nothing happen. “They’re not waking! He killed them!”

Harry yelled out into the dueling arena. “In a duel to unconsciousness you’re out once you’re unconscious. No one has been killed.”

Ginny Tallywick yelled back, “Thanks Professor Pott-” and that was as far as she got before she was nailed in the back with a stunner.

Dudley smiled. “Gotcha!” He couldn’t believe Harry was actually letting him practice his old favorite hobby: picking on younger kids. Perhaps he wasn’t as malicious about it as he used to be, but it still was fun.



The remaining students were all the best ones at shields, but even theirs wouldn't be able to take more than one stunner from Dudley before they'd need to be recast. The first years seemed to be working together even more now as two spells came at Dudley from different sides. "Shield!" was yelled just barely in time and Dudley was safe. He reached into a pocket and pulled out another stick. He was holding up the shield with the original stick and began snapping down the other calling out "Stun!" David Ruppert couldn't get a shield up in time and fell to floor unconscious.

"Hey!" Samantha Fickersly exclaimed. "That's not fair!"

Harry again spoke over the silencing charm. "The rules were magic only and wands only. There's no limit on the number of wands. If you get disarmed, you could try picking up a fallen comrade's wand just as easily. And besides, Dudley only has three wands."

"Hey!" Dudley exclaimed. "You didn't have to tell them that!"

A spell smashed into Dudley's shield and it finally fell. "Oh crud," Dudley exclaimed turning his attention back to his opponents. "Shield!" He quickly called again and kept that shield up. Remembering his training, Dudley this time yelled out "Aye Carumba!" Small red pellet projectiles arced slightly through the air straight past the students' shields and smacked into them with a soft 'Thwap!' The first years' natural reaction was to scream bloody murder and run around relatively aimlessly hoping to dodge these new dangerous items. "Oww!" Cyrus Evers yelled. "You hit me in the eye!"

"Sorry!" Dudley yelled back.

"Is that a hot tamale?" Cyrus asked finally examining the new projectiles closer. It passed the sniff and lick test, so Cyrus decided to bite down and find out. He smiled and happily yelled out, "They are hot tama-" and once again, lack of concentration cost another student their place in the duel.

Dudley seemed content to just keep on calling out "Stun," "Shield," and "Aye Carumba" as he stuck with a steady rotation of those spells.

A couple more students fell to his quick attacks and it was down to just two first years and Dudley.

Derek Chance and Samantha Fickersly were the last two. They worked their way back next to each other and were having a whispered conversation.

Dudley saw this as his opportunity and dropped his shield. He began rumbling straight toward the last two kids. He was using both hands, snapping his sticks forward yelling “Aye Carumba!” over and over again, pelting the two first years with a steady stream of hot tamales. They both started shrieking and turned to run away from the rapidly approaching obese man and his scary cinnamon flavored hailstorm. Neither had a chance as stunners slammed into their unprotected backs as they had turned to run away.

“Yes!” Dudley screamed. “I am the king!” Dudley was elated and pumping his fists into the air. “That’s right! Who’s the muggle now, bitch!”

“Dudley!” Harry scolded firmly, bringing his cousin back to reality. “Congratulations.” Harry turned to the still stunned crowd, none of which were applauding, despite the audio of applause echoing. “Dudley Dursley is the winner.”

Dudley looked around and shrugged. “Don’t I get like a championship belt or something?”

Harry rolled his eyes and snapped his fingers. An especially feminine crown appeared on Dudley’s head. Harry whispered, “Now you get to go wake the students and congratulate them on their duel. Be nice, and you can tell them they all got Outstandings.” Dudley nodded and began casting “Wake!” on the kids.

Harry went back to the podium. “And so now we’ve all seen a muggle win a magical duel.” Harry stated simply and smiled. “Any questions?” It was said so innocently and calmly, you’d think nothing of it, but not even Harry could completely hide the twinkling in his eyes.

Every reporter there began frantically waving their hands in the air. Harry was pleased to see his mass silencing charm was frustrating those just yelling questions out. Harry pointed to a pretty young witch in the front row. "Please state your name, and what publication you represent before your question."

"Judith Dark, International Sorcery. I'm not sure the best way to phrase the question for you, but the gist of it is: What the bloody hell?"

"Language!" Harry chuckled and scolded, "There are children present. And to answer your question, yes Nicholas and I have nearly perfected self-spelling wands, and yes we've made wands muggles can safely use as you all just witnessed in the duel."

Harry pointed to an older gentleman.

"Steven Hogwash, Modern Magical Combat. Can you at all expound on how this is possible? Or what limitations there are?"

Harry nodded. "The short answer is the magic is sort of held in a stasis completely unable to be affected or even detected. We've been experimenting with a variety of ways to trigger the magic's release, both from simple speech, with some safeguards, or actions, like pulling a trigger on a firearm. There are a lot of ideas I'm sure we haven't even thought of yet, but I felt a good first step would be introducing the idea of being able to sell magic, in addition to self-spelling wands, for informed muggles and squibs. In terms of limitations, there haven't been very many."

Steven Hogwash stayed standing and asked, "Excuse me, did you say sell magic?"

Harry nodded. "Sure. Think about it: A new Dark Lord or Lady rises, and his or her band of followers are terrorizing everywhere. So you just walk on down to the hardware store, and pick up a Fidelius charm to hide your home. Not a lot of people can manage a piece of magic like that, but properly stored and contained, you could keep it on the shelves indefinitely. It would be especially useful because muggle-borns and squibs are all too often the first ones targeted."

Harry pointed to a man waving his hand fervently.

“Jimmy Taylor, Photographer for the Daily Prophet. Can you wake Miss Skeeter? No one else’s Ennervate seems to be working.”

Harry smiled and nodded. “Yes, I can.” Harry immediately turned and pointed to an attractive young woman.

She was chuckling at Harry’s answer to the last question. “Elise Kitterbicken, Witches Weekly. Are you seeing anyone?”

Harry groaned and banged his head on the podium. Nicholas came up behind him. “I’ll field this question: Yes, he is.” Harry smiled at Nicholas and Nicholas very reluctantly pointed to a middle-aged woman.

“Sheila Van Wilde, Witches Monthly. This question is for Mr. Flamel. Are you seeing anyone?”

Harry burst out laughing finally understanding Nicholas’ reluctance to call on her. Harry leaned forward and said, “I’ll field this one: Yes, he is.” Harry reluctantly pointed to Jimmy Taylor, who was waving fervently with a frown.

“Jimmy Taylor, again. Would you please wake Miss Skeeter?”

Harry frowned and said, “Fine.” With a wave of his hand, Rita snapped her head up as if she had just abruptly woken from a nap. “What? What’d I miss?” A few reporters were chuckling. “Oh, is the duel over?” She said with a yawn.

Before she could get her bearings and remember just what happened, Harry said loudly, “That’s enough questions for now. Thank you all for coming and we will be having punch and pie as a send-off to another wonderful year at Hogwarts. But before we go, I think we should all give another round of applause to our combatants.” Harry exclaimed while clapping and bowing towards the twelve students chatting quietly with Dudley. “And perhaps even for our muggle winner, Dudley Dursley.”

The twelve kids around him all cheered and Dudley actually blushed. Harry was a bit in shock and barely registered the fact that Dudley was getting some applause from the audience, and it wasn't even manufactured by Harry this time.

"Listen, 'Arry, I'm real sorry I missed your duel." Hagrid said before leaning forward to whisper to Harry. "I was meeting a guy about a water wyrm."

Harry looked up at Hagrid curiously, who was nodding and smiling giddy as a school girl. Harry shook his head and chuckled. "That's okay Hagrid. You can just read about it in the papers tomorrow."

"Thanks, 'Arry. I knew yeh'd unnerstand." Hagrid beamed at him before stopping and noticing someone standing over by a buffet table. "Excuse me, 'Arry. There's someone I'd like t' talk to."

Harry followed Hagrid's line of sight and saw his cousin. Harry chuckled and patted Hagrid on the back. "Alright, Hagrid. I need to go make sure the reporters aren't hounding the first years."

Hagrid just nodded dumbly keeping his sights on the mammoth young man who had caught his eye.

Hagrid was watching the young man intently. Hagrid grabbed a plate and put a few snacks on it and stood up next to the other man. Hagrid checked that the coast was clear and quietly said, "Momen' I saw yeh, I knew. Even wit'out the height, I could tell."

Dudley turned to the huge and oddly familiar looking burly older man. This was an odd start of a conversation. "What did you know?"

Hagrid continued. "I jus knew...knew you were like me...Was it yer mother or yer father?"

Dudley felt like he had seen this man's picture before or that he should know him from somewhere. He wasn't sure how comfortable he was talking to this guy. "I don't know what you mean. Both my parents are muggles."

"It was my mother." Hagrid said shyly, ignoring the other man's denials. "She was one o' the las' ones in Britian."

Suddenly, all those memories the therapists had helped Dudley repress came rushing back to him. "I... I should check on... something."

"No don't go." Hagrid pleaded. "I've – I've only met one other before."

Dudley was thinking about surgeries on his ass now knowing exactly where he knew this man from. But he was aware he had been a brat growing up and wanted to get along with Harry's friends so he asked honestly, "One other what?"

"Another half-giant, o' course," Hagrid answered.

Before either Dudley or Hagrid could react a spell came rushing towards Dudley's unprotected back. With a quick flash of light a golden ring zoomed into place and caught the spell before it was even within three feet of Dudley. Two dozen golden rings all quickly appeared completely surrounding the invisible assailant sending a dozen different spells including binding, silencing, petrifying, and disarming in addition to all sorts of revealing and charm disabling spells.

With a thought, the invisibility cloak covering the man was summoned off him. Harry caught the cloak and intoned in a very forceful voice, "I see you paid a little too much attention to the fact that he's a muggle."

Hagrid looked up and rhetorically asked, "Muggle?"

Harry hadn't even paused. "And not nearly enough to who his cousin is."

Hagrid looked at the man in front of him. "Cousin?" Hagrid's eyes widened. "Dursley!"

Harry looked at the bound, silent, frozen, disarmed man. "Andreas Nott. Sending a heart-stopping curse at an unprotected back." Harry shook his head. "Tsk, ts. I'll see if you can't get a cell near your

nephew. Kingsley! My good man,” Harry cheerfully greeted the approaching head auror. “You can take care of this trash, can’t you?”

Kingsley snickered. “I got this. Enjoy your day, Harry.”

Harry nodded and turned back to Hagrid and Dudley. By this point, Dudley had both of his hands clamped behind his back just above his bottom, and Hagrid seemed to be laughing his head off. Harry decided to save his cousin. “Hey Hagrid, I know how you like dangerous creatures.”

Hagrid’s eyes were wide and he was bobbing his head like a puppy.

Harry chuckled, “I think you might like to meet a good friend of mine who helped make all of this possible. You see the cloaked figure standing by Albus? The one in the robes that seem to be cycling through all the colors of the Hogwarts houses? God I don’t know how Albus talked him into wearing that.”

Hagrid looked over where Harry was pointing. “The nine foot tall fella?” Hagrid asked.

Harry nodded. “Yup, that’s the one. Good friend of mine, named Bob. He’s probably one of the most dangerous magical creatures on the planet.”

“Really?” Hagrid asked. “I’ll see you later, ‘Arry. Twas a treat seeing you again, Dudley.”

Dudley’s whimper goodbye sounded just a little bit like a squeal.

Harry laughed. “Come on, Duddikins, let me introduce you to some of my friends.”

Harry led Dudley over to a table set up in the shade. “Dudley, I’d like you to meet Ginny, Hermione, Luna, and Tonks. Ladies, this is my cousin, Dudley Dursley.”

Dudley smiled and said, "Hello." He saw nothing but frowns and angry stares in response. Dudley asked "Err Harry, they all look like they hate me."

Harry shrugged. "Well these were my friends growing up. And as you can probably guess, they've heard stories about my childhood."

"Oh," Dudley said finally understanding. "So they don't just look it. They really do hate me."

Tonks and Hermione seemed to be nodding, while Luna and Ginny were quietly growling.

Dudley waved meekly. "Oh well. So, which one of these beautiful ladies is your girlfriend?"

Harry paused, wondering how best to answer that question.

..oo00 THE END 00oo..

Author's Note: Yes. That's how I always intended to end it. Lovely, isn't it? Please drop a line saying you liked this story, if you did. Or call me a crude name, or suggest something disgusting if you didn't.

There's now a third and final story in this little universe's trilogy, a sequel to this Cheekquel. It is called "You Did What!" and can be found from my author's page or at story id 2630300. And unlike this story, it has a much stronger semblance of plot.